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MEMOIRS

OF THE

CONFEDERATE WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE

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BY

HEROS VON BORCKE

LATELY CHIEF OF STAFF TO GENERAL J. E. B. STUART

IN TWO VOLUMES, WITH A MAP

VOL. II.

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MEMOIRS

OF THE

CONFEDERATE WAR.

CHAPTER X.

CHANGE OF BASE—CROSSING OF THE SHENANDOAH—FIGHTS IN LOUDOUN AND FAUQUIER—CROSSING OF THE RAPPAHANNOCK—FIGHTS IN THE REGION BETWEEN THE HAZEL AND RAPPAHANNOCK RIVERS—HEADQUARTERS NEAR CULPEPPER COURT-HOUSE—MY DEPARTURE FOR RICHMOND—FIGHTS AT THE POTHOUSE AND ALDIE—RECEPTION AT MIDDLEBURG.

GENERAL M'CLELLAN, the Federal Commander-in-Chief, having largely reinforced his army with regiments from the new levy of 300,000 volunteers called out for nine months, and having brought it to a strength of 140,000 men, well equipped in every respect, had at last determined upon a forward movement, all unknowing at the time that the supreme command was soon to be taken from him by the Government at Washington. The right wing of the

Federal forces, by a strong demonstration towards Harper's Ferry, made a show of invading Virginia from this point, but the great bulk of the army crossed the Potomac about fifteen miles lower down, near the little town of Berlin. General Lee, having been opportunely informed by his vigilant cavalry of the enemy's operations, had commenced, in the mean time, a movement on the opposite side of the Blue Ridge, in a nearly parallel direction towards Front Royal, being about a day's march ahead. Longstreet's corps was in the advance, Jackson's troops following slowly, covering the rear, and still holding the passes of the Blue Ridge, Snicker's, Ashby's and Chester Gaps. The cavalry under Stuart had orders to cross the Ridge at Snicker's Gap, to watch closely the movements of the enemy, retard him as much as possible, and protect the left flank of our army.

So we rode quietly along in the tracks of our horsemen, who, before the Staff had left "The Bower," had proceeded in the direction of Berryville. Our mercurial soldiers were as gay as ever, and even the most sentimental members of the Staff had rallied from the despondence incidental to departure from our late encampment, when during the afternoon we reached *en route* the little town of Smithfield, where, under Bob Sweeney's direction as *impresario*, we managed to get up a serenade for the

amiable widow who had entertained me with such hospitality.

Meanwhile the rain, which had been falling when we rode off from "The Bower," had ceased, a keen north wind had set in, and it had begun to freeze hard, when, late at night, we reached Berryville, chilled, wet, and hungry. The provisions of the country had been more or less consumed by the troops who had preceded us on the march, and it was therefore regarded as exceedingly apropos that we were invited to supper by a prominent citizen, at whose pleasant house we greatly enjoyed a warm cup of tea, a capital old Virginia ham, and afterwards a pipe of Virginia tobacco before a roaring wood-fire.

Our troops bivouacked about two miles from town; and as on a march, for the sake of the example, we never took up our quarters beneath a roof, we left our hospitable entertainer about midnight, and established ourselves in an open field under some old locust-trees, near several large fodder-stacks, which furnished us with abundant food for our horses. It was a clear, cold, starlight night, and as we had no protection from the frost but our blankets, we kept in lively blaze several tremendous fires, the wood for which each and every one of us had assisted in collecting. General and Staff were all fast asleep, when, on a sudden, we were aroused by a loud crash, which start-

led even the feeding horses and mules. One of the old hollow trees, against the trunk of which our largest fire had been imprudently kindled, after smouldering for hours, had at last yielded to the force of the wind and fallen heavily to the ground, fortunately without doing any damage whatever.

In the early morning, when we awoke to the *reveillé*, the fires had quite burnt out, a white hoar-frost lay thickly over every object around us, and the shivering officers of our military family expressed in every feature their ardent desire for a good warm breakfast. As we were discussing the probabilities of such a thing, we were most agreeably surprised by the kind invitation of a neighbouring planter to satisfy ourselves at his hospitable board, an invitation which we did not hesitate to accept. To provide against a future want of breakfast, when a good Samaritan might not be so near at hand, our careful mess-caterer, the portly doctor of our Staff, availed himself of the opportunity of purchasing a quantity of hams and bacon, which, being deposited for safety in an army-waggon, were stolen before two hours had elapsed by some of our rascally negro camp-followers.

The sun shone down with the warmth and glory of the soft Indian summer, a season of peculiar loveliness in America, when we reached the Shenandoah, our passage of which was extremely picturesque.

The banks of this beautiful stream are often bold, and sometimes even majestic, the current breaking through gigantic cliffs which rise to the height of several hundred feet on either side, or flowing placidly along between wooded shores, whose stately trees, where the river is narrowest, almost intermingle their branches. The forests skirting the course of the Shenandoah were now glowing with the gorgeous hues of the American autumn, which the landscape-painter cannot adequately reproduce nor the writer properly describe. The light saffron of the chestnut-trees was in effective contrast with the rich crimson of the oaks and maples, while the trailing vines and parasites displayed every tint from the palest pink to the deepest purple. Upon the opposite shore, at a distance of only a few hundred yards from the margin of the river, rose the mountain-range of the Blue Ridge thickly covered with forest, within whose depths the head of our column was just disappearing as we arrived at the bank. The main body was passing the stream, while here and there a single trooper might be seen watering his horse or quietly examining his weapons.

On the summit of the mountain we found a portion of our Maryland cavalry, which, having been stationed there to guard Snicker's Gap, had been engaged in a sharp conflict with a party of Federal cavalry that disputed its possession, and had driven back their

opponents with severe loss. Dead bodies of men and animals, lying still unburied along the road, gave evidence of the obstinacy of the fight on both sides. The Federal army in its forward movement had meanwhile made but slow progress, the main body having proceeded no farther than Leesburg and its immediate neighbourhood, only a few detachments of cavalry having advanced beyond that point. So we continued our march wholly without interruption all the beautiful autumn day through the smiling county of Loudoun, one of the fairest and most fertile regions in Virginia, passing many fine estates with extensive corn-fields and large orchards, until we arrived in the evening in the vicinity of the little village of Upperville, where we bivouacked, and without difficulty obtained abundant provisions for our men and forage for our animals.

The counties of Loudoun and Fauquier had known but little as yet of the devastations of the war, and abounded in supplies of every description, which were eagerly offered for sale by the farmers at moderate prices, and might have subsisted our army for six months. Instead of being permitted to profit by this plenty, we had been compelled for the past two months, through the mismanagement and want of experience of the officials of the Quartermaster's Department at Richmond, and against the earnest

remonstrances of General Lee, to draw all our supplies from the capital, whence they were sent by rail to Staunton, there to be packed into waggons and deported beyond Winchester, a distance of more than one hundred miles after leaving the railroad. The subsistence which was so near at hand was thus left for the enemy, by whom it was afterwards used to the greatest advantage. The importance, nay the necessity, in a war of such magnitude, carried on over so vast and thinly-populated a territory, of establishing great magazines for the collection and storage of provisions for the army, very often occurred to me during the struggle in America, and I have, on several occasions, expressed my opinion with regard to it. Had the Confederate authorities, following Napoleon's example, established at the beginning of the war (when it might easily have been done) large depots of army-supplies at points not exposed, like Richmond, to raids of cavalry, I am convinced that it would have had a material influence on the final issue of the great conflict. The difficulties that were experienced during the last two years of the war in supporting the army, and the terrible privations to which men and animals were subjected in consequence of early maladministration and neglect, can be known only to those who were eyewitnesses of the misfortune and participants in the suffering.

Having sent out a strong cordon of pickets from our place of bivouac near Upperville, General Stuart yielded to the urgent solicitations of Dr Eliason, our staff-surgeon, to ride with him to his home in the village, and spend the evening and night at his house. As I was included in the invitation, I bore them company. We were received very cordially by the ladies of the doctor's family, and many others, who, as soon as our arrival was known, had flocked to the mansion. I very quickly secured for myself the friendship of Dr Eliason's little daughter, a child of ten years of age, who suffered under the sad infirmity of blindness. With the most eager interest she listened to the words of the foreign soldier, whom she required to give her an exact description of his personal appearance; and I was deeply touched as I looked into those tender, rayless blue eyes which gave back no answering glance to my own, and which were yet bent towards me with such seeming intelligence. How little I thought, as I enjoyed the hospitality of these kind people, that nine months later I was to be brought to their house prostrated by a wound which the surgeons declared to be mortal, and that I was to be received by them with an affectionate sympathy such as they could only be expected to manifest for a near and dear relative!

31*st October*.—Our horses stood at the door of Dr

Eliason's house at the hour of sunrise, and a short gallop brought us to the bivouac of our horsemen, whom we at once aroused to activity with orders for immediate saddling. As Messieurs the Yankees were so long in finding us out, General Stuart had determined to look after them; and in a few minutes our column, animated by the hope of again meeting the enemy, was in motion along the road leading to the little town of Union, about midway between Upperville and Leesburg, near which latter place we were quite sure of encountering them. We reached Union at noon, where we came to a halt, sending out in various directions scouts and patrols, who speedily reported that the main body of the Federal cavalry were at Aldie, where they were feeding their horses, having arrived there since morning, but that a squadron of them was three miles nearer to us at a farm known as Pothouse. Towards this squadron we started immediately, and, moving upon by-roads, arrived within a few hundred yards of them before they had any idea of our approach. Their earliest warning of danger was the wild Confederate yell with which our advance-guard dashed upon them in the charge. They belonged to the 3d Indiana Cavalry, a regiment which we had often met in battle, and which always fought with great steadiness and courage. I could not resist joining in the attack upon

our old enemies, and was soon in the midst of the fight. This lasted, however, only a few minutes. After a short but gallant resistance, the Federal lines were broken, a great part of the men were cut down or taken prisoners, and the rest of them driven into rapid flight, pursued closely by the Confederates.

Captain Farley * and myself, being the foremost of the pursuers, had a very exciting chase of the captain commanding the Federal squadron, who, at every demand that we made for his surrender, only spurred his horse into a more furious gallop, occasionally turning to fire at us with his revolver. But

* Captain Farley, who served as a volunteer aide-de-camp on the Staff of General Stuart, was a very remarkable young man. He was by birth a South Carolinian, but he entered the service quite independently of all State military organisations. Promotions and commissions had been frequently offered him by the General, but he refused them all, preferring to be bound to no particular line of duty, but to fight, to use an American phrase, "on his own hook." He was accustomed to go entirely alone upon the most dangerous scouting expeditions. With his own hand he had killed more than thirty of his country's enemies, and had never received the slightest injury, until June 1863, when, in the great cavalry battle at Brandy Station, a shell from a Federal battery terminated his heroic exploits with his life. Captain Farley was of medium stature, but he was sinewy, and strongly built, and capable of great endurance. His expression of countenance was singularly winning, and had something of feminine tenderness; indeed, it seemed difficult to believe that this boy, with the long fair hair, the mild blue eyes, the soft voice and modest mien, was the daring dragoon whose appearance in battle was always terrible to the foe.

each moment I got nearer and nearer to him; the long strides of my charger at last brought me to his side; and I was just raising myself in the saddle to put an end to the chase with a single stroke of my sabre, when, at the crack of Farley's pistol, the fugitive, shot through the back, tumbled from his horse in the dust.

Yet a little further Farley and myself continued in pursuit of the flying Federals, and then returned to rejoin General Stuart. While slowly retracing my steps, I discovered the unfortunate captain, lying against the fence on the roadside, apparently in great agony, and evidently enough in a most uncomfortable situation. Desirous of doing all that I could to alleviate his misery, I alighted from my horse and raised the poor fellow into an easier recumbent position, despatching at the same time one of my couriers to our staff-surgeon, Dr Eliason, with the request that he would come to me as speedily as possible. The wounded officer seemed to me in a state of delirium, calling out, as he did, to every passing horseman, that the rebels who had killed him were about to rob him also, and scattering his personal effects, his watch, money, &c., in the road, so that I had some difficulty in saving them for him. One of our orderlies, who had galloped up, begged me to give him the captain's canteen, it

being a very large and handsome one. This of course I refused, the more decidedly as the poor fellow had been crying out continually for drink, and, resting upon my arm, had already nearly exhausted the canteen of its contents. In a few moments Dr Eliason came up, and, having examined the wound, said to me, "Major, this man is mortally wounded, but what you have taken for delirium is nothing more than a very deep state of intoxication, which had commenced before the shot was received." I did not at once fully credit this medical opinion, and my surprise was therefore great when, taking a smell of the canteen, which I had supposed to contain water, I found that it had been filled with strong apple-brandy, which the unfortunate man had snatched at in his dying moments. When the next morning I sent his effects to the temporary field-hospital, to which he had been conveyed over night, I received the report that he had died before day-break, still heavily intoxicated. Fortunately we were enabled to find out his address, and had the satisfaction of sending his valuables to his family in Indiana.

Our squadron that had been sent in chase of the Yankees, having continued the game into the village of Aldie, and having been much scattered by the length of the pursuit, was met at that place by a

fresh body of Federal horse, and easily repulsed. But our main column was very soon at hand for its protection, and reached a range of hills overlooking the village, in time to see a force of several thousand of the enemy's cavalry advancing in beautiful lines across an open field on the right. The fight was at once opened with great spirit by Pelham's guns, which met with a furious response from several Federal batteries, and we were soon hotly engaged all along our line of battle. The enemy's resistance was obstinate; charges and counter-charges were made over the plateau in our front, and for a time the issue seemed doubtful, no decided advantage having been gained on either side. At last, however, we succeeded in driving the Yankees back into the woods, and before sunset they were in full retreat, by the road they had come, towards Leesburg. *Our flying artillery, under the intrepid and energetic John Pelham, whom I have so often had occasion to mention in these memoirs, had, as usual, done admirable service, disabling several of the enemy's guns, and contributing greatly, by the terror it carried into their advancing columns, to the final result.* About dusk in the evening we

* The famous "Stuart Horse Artillery" was made up of volunteers of many nationalities, and embraced Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans, Spaniards, and Americans. Many of these men

marched back along the road to Middleburg, near which place General Stuart intended to encamp, having ordered me to gallop ahead of the column into the village to make the necessary arrangements for food and forage with the Cavalry Quartermaster stationed there.

Middleburg is a pleasant little place, of some 1500 inhabitants, which, by reason of its proximity to the Federal lines, had often been visited by raiding and scouting parties of the enemy, and had

had not brought to the standard under which they served an immaculate reputation, but they distinguished themselves on every field of battle, and established such an enviable character for daring and good conduct that the body was soon regarded as a *corps d'élite* by the whole army, and it came to be considered an honour to be one of them. I have often seen these men serving their pieces in the hottest of the fight, laughing, singing, and joking each other, utterly regardless of the destruction which cannon-shot and musket-ball were making in their ranks. They were devoted to their young chief, John Pelham, whom an English writer, Captain Chesney, justly styles "the boy hero;" and as they knew my intimacy with him, and as in many engagements we had fought side by side, they extended something of this partiality to myself, and whenever I galloped up to the batteries during a battle, or passed them on the march, addressing a friendly salutation in English, French, or German, to such of them as I knew best, I was always received with loud cheering. They called Pelham and myself, in honourable association, "our fighting Majors," and after my dear friend's death, and when I had myself been disabled by wounds, I often received letters from the *braves* of the "Stuart Horse Artillery" written in a style sufficiently inelegant and extraordinary, but expressive of the sincerest sympathy and attachment.

suffered specially in the shameless barbarities committed by those Yankee robbers, Milroy and Geary. The citizens had awaited the result of our late combat with the greatest anxiety, and manifested their satisfaction at our success in loud expressions of rejoicing. Riding up the main street of the village, I was brought to a halt by a group of very pretty young girls, who were carrying refreshments to the soldiers, and invited me to partake of them, an offer which I was not strong enough to decline. In the conversation which followed, my fair entertainers expressed the greatest desire to see General Stuart, and were delighted beyond measure to hear that the bold cavalry leader was my personal friend, and that I should probably have little difficulty in persuading him to devote a quarter of an hour to their charming company. This spread like wildfire through the village, so that half an hour later, when Stuart galloped up to me, I was attended by a staff of fifty or sixty ladies, of various ages, from blooming girlhood to matronly maturity. The General very willingly consented to remain for a while that every one might have an opportunity of seeing him, and was immediately surrounded by the ladies, all eager to catch the words that fell from his lips, and many with tears in their eyes kissing the skirt of his uniform coat or the glove upon his hand. This was too

much for the gallantry of our leader, who smilingly said to his gentle admirers, "Ladies, your kisses would be more acceptable to me if given upon the cheek." Thereupon the attacking force wavered and hesitated for a moment; but an elderly lady, breaking through the ranks, advanced boldly, and, throwing her arms around Stuart's neck, gave him a hearty smack, which served as the signal for a general charge. The kisses now popped in rapid succession like musketry, and at last became volleys, until our General was placed under as hot a fire as I had ever seen him sustain on the field of battle. When all was over, and we had mounted our horses, Stuart, who was more or less exhausted, said to me, "Von, this is a pretty little trick you have played me, but in future I shall detail you for this sort of service." I answered that I would enter upon it with infinite pleasure, provided he would permit me to reverse his mode of procedure, and commence with the young ladies. The General and Staff bivouacked with the cavalry near Middleburg, while for me was reserved the agreeable duty of riding on special business to Upperville, where, beneath the hospitable roof of Dr Eliason, I passed some pleasant hours with the family circle, to whom I had to recite fully the events and adventures of the day.

CHAPTER XI.

FIGHTS NEAR UNION—RETREAT TOWARDS UPPERVILLE—FIGHT NEAR UPPERVILLE—RETREAT TOWARDS PARIS.

THE following morning we received reports that the enemy in heavy force was advancing from Leesburg in the direction of Union. Thither we marched at once, arriving just in time to occupy a naturally strong position about a mile and a half from the little village. Scarcely had our artillery got ready for action, when the Yankees made their appearance, and there began a lively cannonade with spirited sharpshooting, the latter doing little damage to either party, as the high stone fences which enclose the fields in this part of Virginia afforded protection to both sides. The Federal cavalry being far superior in numbers to our own, and our scouts reporting the approach of a strong infantry force, whose glistening bayonets, indeed, we could already see in the far prospect, it seemed almost certain that, after some little resistance, we should be compelled to retire.

The Yankees, however, appeared to have their reasons for not moving too rapidly forward, and so the day passed in comparative inaction, the whole resembling, with its slow manœuvring of troops and regular firing, the operations of a sham-fight or a field-day of volunteers.

Stuart and Fitz Lee, with the officers of their respective Staffs, had taken their position on a gigantic rock, from which they had an excellent view of the movements of the Yankees, and could observe with perfect security the effect of the incessant explosions of the shells that were exchanged between our own guns and those of the enemy. We had the opportunity here of witnessing one of those daring feats which Pelham was so constantly performing. He had been greatly annoyed during the day by a squadron of Federal cavalry which operated with great dash against his batteries, rapidly throwing forward their sharpshooters and as rapidly withdrawing them, after their muskets had been discharged, behind a piece of wood which completely hid them from view. This they did before Pelham could get a shot at them, and they had already killed or disabled many of his horses, when our gallant major, losing all patience, suddenly advanced with one of his light howitzers at full gallop towards the wood, where the horses were unhitched and the piece drawn by hand

through the impeding undergrowth which rendered further progress of the horses impossible. From our position, which was some distance to the right of the batteries, we could plainly see the Yankee squadron, which had come very quietly to a halt without the slightest suspicion that a cannon loaded with a double charge of canister was directed upon them from a point only a few hundred yards off. All at once, the thunder of the howitzer was heard, and its iron hail swept through the ranks of the Yankees, killing eight of their number, among whom was the colour-bearer, wounding several others, and putting the rest to flight in hopeless stampede. Pelham and his cannoneers now emerged from the wood in a run, bringing with them many captured men and horses, and the Federal standard, amid loud shouts of applause. Before the Yankees could recover from their astonishment, the howitzer was removed, the horses were hitched to it again, and it had arrived safely at the battery.

With the approach of evening the firing ceased, and as the smoke of the camp-fires rising all along the Federal lines clearly indicated that it was not the enemy's intention to push on further during the night, Stuart gave orders for his command to encamp about a mile beyond Union, after having established a strong cordon of pickets in front of the village.

The General and his Staff bivouacked near the extensive plantation of a Mr C., at whose house we supped luxuriously, our host serving up for us a gigantic saddle of Virginia mutton which might have rivalled any of the famous southdowns of Old England.

Peacefully broke the morning of Sunday the 3d of November, a rich, soft day, with all the splendour of the autumnal sunshine, and all the quietude of the Christian Sabbath, till, instead of the sweet church-bells from the neighbouring village calling us to the house of God, we caught the summons to the field in the rattle of musketry and the roar of cannon. It would have been exceptional, indeed, if, confronting the enemy so closely, we had not been compelled to fight on this "day of rest," for it is remarkable that many of the most important and sanguinary engagements of the war in America—Chancellorsville and others—were fought on Sunday.

The enemy commenced his attack on us at an early hour with great vigour. A double line of tirailleurs advanced in excellent order; four batteries opened upon our guns from different points; the air shook with the continuous roar of the cannonade; on every side the bullets buzzed like infuriated insects; on the whole, the outward signs were rather those of a great battle than of a mere cavalry combat. This day the enemy's artillery was admirably well served,

and its effect was very dreadful. Just as I rode up to a battery, which was answering as rapidly as possible the Yankee fire, a hostile shell blew up one of our caissons, killing and wounding several of the men, and stunning me completely for several minutes. For some time the fire was terrific at this spot. In less than half an hour one battery alone lost fifteen men killed and wounded, and I was obliged to force the frightened ambulance-drivers to the assistance of their suffering and dying comrades, by putting my revolver to their heads and threatening to shoot them if they did not go.

On our right the sharpshooting grew warmer and warmer, the enemy bringing line after line of their dismounted men into action, and I was despatched thither by General Stuart to watch the movements of the Yankees, and to animate our soldiers to an obstinate opposition. Here I found my dashing friend Rosser stationed with his brave fellows of the 5th Virginia Cavalry. In reply to my question as to how he was getting along, he said, "Come and see for yourself." So, to obtain a good look at the enemy, we rode forward together through the wide gaps in the stone fences, which had been made to admit of the passage of cavalry and artillery, and presently discovered, somewhat late, that we had got much nearer to our antagonists than we had in-

tended. Suddenly the Yankee sharpshooters emerged from behind rocks and trees, sending their bullets in most alarming proximity to our ears, and running forward to cut us off from our line of retreat. Fortunately, we were both well mounted, and our horses had escaped a wound, so that we were able to clear the stone fences, where they stood in our way, without difficulty. This steeplechase afforded great amusement to Rosser, who seemed delighted at having got me into what he called "a little trap," but what I regarded as an exceedingly ticklish situation.

As the far superior numbers of the enemy's cavalry, which up to this time we had successfully opposed, began now to be reinforced by infantry, General Stuart at last decided to fall back upon a new position. The retreat through Union was admirably covered by Pelham with his artillery, and was executed with great steadiness and order under a perfect hail of shot and shell, which, crashing through the houses of the little village, had already set on fire several stables and straw-ricks. The furious flames, leaping from one to another of these great masses of combustible material, and the dense volumes of smoke that rolled from them, added to the terror and confusion of the scene, which now became truly frightful. On a ridge, behind a small creek where we had encamped the previous night, about a

mile and a half beyond the town on the road leading to Upperville, we halted and again confronted our assailants, who did not keep us long in waiting for their attack, and ere half an hour had elapsed the thunder of cannon again shook the air, and the sharpshooters on either side were hotly engaged.

The enemy here, by a resolute and united charge, drove a portion of our dismounted men back in some confusion through the woods; and the officer in command, the gallant young Captain Bullock of the 5th Virginia, in the attempt to rally them, had his horse shot under him, and, before he could get on his legs again, found himself surrounded by the Yankees, who demanded his surrender. Bullock, however, responded with two shots of his revolver, killing two of his adversaries, and then endeavoured to save himself by flight. The whole incident having taken place within fifty paces of Stuart and myself, we could see, and even distinctly hear, the Yankees as they gave chase to our poor captain. Taking some of our couriers, and such of the tirailleurs as had recovered from their stampede, with us, we galloped forward at once to the assistance of our brave comrade, whom we succeeded in rescuing from his pursuers, but in a state of such utter exhaustion that we had to lift him to the back of one of the led horses that chanced to be on the spot.

After a short but spirited resistance we were again compelled to retire, turning round and showing fight wherever the nature of the ground would admit of it, until late in the afternoon we took a new position near the large estate of Colonel Dulaney, which was of some strategetical importance. Preparing for a more serious opposition to the movements of the enemy, Stuart and myself had halted on an eminence which afforded an extensive view of the surrounding country, when a squadron of Federal cavalry, which came trotting along over an open field in beautiful lines as if on parade, and which seemed quite disdainful of the opposing host, attracted our attention. Stuart turned to me, and said, "Major, pray amuse yourself with giving these gentlemen a lesson: take two of Pelham's guns, place them in such position as you think best, and receive our impudent friends with a proper salute." Our cannoneers followed me with loud expressions of joy, bringing with them the two howitzers, to a small hill, where dense bushes concealed our preparations from the enemy's notice. The guns were carefully aimed, and when the hostile squadron came within easy range, both shots sounded simultaneously, the shells exploding with wonderful accuracy right in front of the foe, emptying several saddles, and driving our contemp-

tuous adversaries into headlong flight, along the line of which we sent several missiles from the howitzers with less effect.

All our pieces were now concentrated on a wooded acclivity, and were soon brought into a spirited cannonade with four or five hostile batteries. As usual, General Stuart and his Staff exposed themselves for several hours continuously to the hottest fire—shells and solid shot fell around us on all sides, covering us with dust and dirt, and tearing the splinters from the trees right and left; and I could not comprehend how any of us escaped death. The scene was one of the wildest and grandest confusion and destruction. Men were falling, killed or wounded, on every hand, wounded horses galloped hither and thither, and the numerous herds of cattle, which had until that Sunday grazed peacefully in their wide pastures, wrought up to the highest pitch of brute frenzy by the first battle they had ever known, ran about in frantic terror and excitement.

In the very fury of the cannonade, one or two little incidents excited our surprise and amusement. A shell, falling in the midst of a large flock of sheep, exploded there, and we thought that the greater part had been converted into mutton; but when the dust and smoke had cleared away, we

saw the frightened animals scamper off, not one of their number missing, and all apparently unhurt. A few minutes afterwards, a stout young bullock, out of a herd of oxen that had been galloping up and down for a considerable time before our batteries, suddenly threw a sommersault, and lay, to all seeming, dead upon the field, but presently got on his legs again, and after reeling and tumbling about for a little while in a drunken sort of way, started off all at once with the speed of an arrow. I have already mentioned cases of prostration by "windage" of cannon-balls. A more diverting instance occurred, in a later fight, with one of our soldiers, a North Carolinian, who, lying flat on his back, apparently badly wounded, answered to General Stuart's inquiry whether he was hurt, "Oh, General, I shall soon be all right again, but I am dreadfully demoralised by a bomb-shell;" the fact being, that a cannon-ball, passing very close to his head, had knocked him over.

With the darkness of evening, our situation became critical. Our artillery had lost many men and horses; our cavalry, having been exposed all day to a murderous fire, had also suffered severely, and our sharpshooters were unable any longer to resist the double and triple lines of Federal tirailleurs, which were again and again sent against

them. General Stuart accordingly determined to retreat to Upperville, and ordered me to recall our dismounted men all along the line. To obey this order, I had to ride to our extreme right, where Captain Farley, with a small body of riflemen, occupied some hay-stacks, which he had held all day against the vastly superior numbers of the enemy. As I was the only man on horseback in range of the Yankee carbines, I was exposed for the whole distance to a heavy fusillade; but returning was yet more perilous, for having to ride between the enemy and our own troops, the former hotly pursuing, and the latter, in their dogged retreat, returning with spirit every shot that was sent after them, I was subjected to two fires, and was in as much danger of being killed by friendly as by hostile bullets.

The Yankees did not continue their pursuit after nightfall, and allowed us to retire quietly to the vicinity of Upperville, about a mile from which place we bivouacked. A feeling of devout and fervent thankfulness possessed my heart, as I lay down on my blanket for a short night's rest, and recalled the innumerable dangers through which I had safely passed on that exciting eventful day. These smaller combats with the enemy are far more dangerous than great battles. Especially is this

true as regards the staff-officer, who, having to be constantly in the saddle, remains throughout the day exposed to the enemy's particular attentions. In a general engagement there is much more rattle of musketry and thunder of cannon, but the fire is not so much concentrated upon a small tract of ground, and four-fifths of the balls and bullets which wound or kill, find their mark accidentally.

3*d November.*—Fighting was renewed the following morning, and the tremendous hosts of the Yankees advancing upon us across the fields, which I could compare only to a mighty avalanche, seemed likely to crush everything before them; but the gallant fellows of Fitz Lee's brigade stood the shock of their attack nobly, and succeeded for a time in checking the onward movement of their columns. Stuart perceiving, however, that he could not long maintain his ground, sent me off in the direction of Paris to select a new position, where the nature of the country would facilitate further resistance. This I soon found near Ashby's Gap, a few miles from Upperville, where a range of mountains, spurs of the Blue Ridge, accessible for a long distance only by a single road, made successful opposition to a far superior force possible. On my return to the General, the conflict had reached its height, and, in my opinion, the urgent necessity of immediate retreat was patent

to all. Nevertheless, Stuart was for continuing the struggle. Again and again animating his men by his presence and the exposure of his own person, he led our admirable soldiers to the conflict. Not until one of our caissons had been exploded by a well-aimed shot; not until Colonel Wickham, temporarily commanding Fitz Lee's brigade, had been wounded at my side, a fragment of shell striking him in the neck; not until the hostile infantry was outflanking us on either side,—was the order given for the withdrawal, which, in consequence of the long delay of our commander in issuing the order, was managed, I am sorry to say, with a great deal of haste and confusion, and came very near being a rout. The dismounted sharpshooters, running back hurriedly to their horses, upon gaining them, rode off, without forming, in every direction; the regiments themselves, exposed to a concentrated withering fire of the enemy, galloped confusedly, and in precipitation, through the narrow streets of Upperville, followed by the hostile cavalry in eager pursuit.

General Stuart and myself were the last of our column to ride through the village, escaping almost miraculously the Yankee balls and bullets that whistled after us, and both receiving slight injury from a falling chimney, which, at the very moment of our passing by it, was struck by a shell, and top-

pled over by the explosion, the shattered stones and bricks flying far and wide. We had not left the village when the enemy entered it on the opposite side; and yet many heroic young ladies, regardless of the great danger, ran out of the houses to wave a last farewell to us with their cambric handkerchiefs, and, what was better still, to seek out, amidst this fearful tempest of shells and bullets, our poor wounded, who, unable to follow their flying comrades, were lying about, in their agony, anywhere in the dusty streets.

Too much credit cannot be given to Pelham for the great forethought and coolness with which he had taken his artillery along a little by-path around the village to a point about a mile distant, where, placing his guns in a favourable position, he skilfully covered our retreat, and, by the accuracy and rapidity of his firing, saved us from greater disaster. My brave friend was himself hard at work in his shirt-sleeves, taking a hand with the cannoneers in loading and aiming the pieces. Meanwhile the united efforts of General Stuart and the members of his Staff had availed to put a stop to the stampede; our regiments were re-formed, and our lines re-established. But the scene was still frightful. Wounded men on foot were limping to the rear, or riding two on one horse; wounded animals were galloping wildly over the field; ambulances and army-waggons were being

hurried along the road, on which was concentrated a heavy fire of the hostile batteries, and over which canister and shell were howling in the air, or ricochetting on the hard dry ground.

Pelham's guns were now in a very dangerous situation, a squadron of Federal cavalry having advanced against them at a gallop, and having dismounted and placed a number of men behind a stone fence not more than 200 yards distant, from which they poured a fatal carbine fire upon the gunners and artillery-horses. I tried my best to lead two squadrons of one of our regiments forward to a charge, that I might drive the Yankees from this position; but after following me at a gallop to within eighty yards of the wall, they broke into rapid flight at the murderous volley of the sharpshooters. Pelham was doing his best, in the mean time, to dislodge the bold riflemen, by firing canister at the wall, but this had not the desired effect in consequence of the thickness of the barrier, so I shouted out to him, "Try solid shot!" which he did at once, and with the best results. Every ball demolished large sections of the fence, scattering the fragments of the stones all around, killing and wounding many of the sharpshooters behind it, and driving off the rest, whom we pursued, cutting down and taking prisoners nearly all of them.

About six o'clock in the evening we arrived at the heights near Ashby's Gap, from which we could overlook the whole lower country towards Upperville. . In the waning light of the day we could plainly discern that for a considerable distance it was covered with the dark masses of the enemy, with their long cavalry columns and artillery-trains, so that we had no reason to indulge chagrin at having been put to flight by numbers more than ten times superior to our own. The exceeding narrowness of the approach, and the two mountain-ridges stretching out on either side of it, made defence an easy affair; not to mention the fact that D. H. Hill, with his division, was only a few miles farther back, ready to come to our assistance at any moment that this might be necessary.

The hostile batteries, occupying the heights near Upperville, kept up an incessant firing upon our troops ascending the mountain, but not being able at so great a distance to get the necessary elevation, their shells fell, and exploded innocently, at the base of the ridge, and our own batteries did not any longer respond. Only a 12-pounder Whitworth gun, which yet held its position half a mile in our rear, maintained the fight, and here stood its very first trial magnificently. Being on the higher part of the mountain, watching closely the enemy's move-

ments with my trusty field-glass, I had the full opportunity of witnessing the wonderful efficiency and accuracy of this fine gun. When the wholly ineffective bombardment of our position had been carried on for some time by the Federal batteries, I heard all at once the sharp clear report of the Whitworth, and distinctly saw the ball strike, at a distance of four miles from the gun, right in the midst of the enemy's artillery, which, changing its position again and again as the Whitworth missiles became more and more destructive, at last altogether retired. Firing ceased entirely with the coming darkness; and as we saw by the Yankees going into camp that the pursuit would not be continued by them until the following day, we determined to give rest to our weary men and horses, and the glow of our bivouac-fires was soon reflected from the mountains around us.

CHAPTER XII.

NIGHT-RIDE TO JACKSON'S CAMP — RETURN ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS—WE ARE CUT OFF BY THE ENEMY—FIGHT AT BARBER'S CROSS-ROADS—RETREAT TOWARDS ORLEANS AND ACROSS THE RAPPAHANNOCK—FIGHTS NEAR WATERLOO BRIDGE AND JEFFERSON—CROSSING OF THE HAZEL RIVER—BIVOUAC IN THE SNOW—SCOUT WITH GENERAL STUART—HEADQUARTERS NEAR CULPEPPER COURT-HOUSE—RECONNAISSANCE IN FORCE, AND FIGHT NEAR EMMETSVILLE.

4th November.—The deep sleep which succeeded to the fatigues of the previous day had hardly fallen upon me, when I was aroused by the touch of Stuart's hand upon my shoulder. The General's wish was that I should bear him company, with several of our couriers and Dr Eliason, who was well acquainted with all the roads in the neighbouring county, to the headquarters of General Jackson, who had encamped about twelve miles off, on the opposite side of the Shenandoah, near the village of Millwood. The command of our cavalry had been temporarily transferred to Colonel Rosser, who had instructions to hold his position as long as

possible, and to keep General Stuart informed by frequent messengers of the progress of the impending fight.

A cold wind was blowing in our faces as we trotted through the village of Paris in the direction of the Shenandoah, and it was freezing hard when we reached the stream, about midnight, at a point where ordinarily it was easily fordable, but where we found it so much swollen by the recent rains in the mountains that we were compelled to cross it swimming. We reached the opposite bank in safety, but chilled through and with soaking garments. Such was the intensity of the frost, that in a very few minutes our cloaks and blankets were frozen quite stiff; and the water, as it dripped from the flanks of our horses, congealed into icicles, and the legs of the animals were rough with ice. But a sharp ride, as it promoted the circulation of the blood, kept us tolerably warm, and at two o'clock in the morning we arrived at Jackson's encampment. Stuart, being unwilling in his great tenderness for Old Stonewall to disturb his slumbers, proposed that we should seek rest for the remaining hours of the night; but in our frozen condition, it being first necessary that we should thaw out our garments before we could dry them, we preferred building a huge fire of logs, around whose cheerful blaze we

sat and smoked our pipes, though, with teeth chattering like castanets, this was smoking under difficulties. Jackson, who, in accordance with his usual habit, awoke with the earliest glimmer of day, no sooner discovered us than he expressed his regret at our evident discomfort, but gave us the readiest consolation by ordering breakfast to be immediately prepared. Nothing was better calculated to restore our good spirits than the summons to the General's large breakfast-table, where the aroma rose in clouds of vapour from an immense coffee-pot, and where stood a magnificent haunch of venison, cold, a present from a neighbouring planter.

The good cheer had the happiest effect on Stuart, who enlivened our repast with abundant anecdote and the recital of many a joke at the expense of his companions-in-arms. It was his special delight to tease me on account of the little mistakes I still frequently committed in speaking the English language, which he always cleverly turned so as to excite the merriment of his auditors. During one of our many conversations concerning Old Stonewall, his personal traits and military character, while intending to say, "It warms my heart when he talks to me," I had employed the expression, "It makes my heart burn," &c. Stuart now took occasion to repeat my remark, and represented me most absurdly as having

declared that "it gave me the heartburn to hear Jackson talk," which of course provoked the roaring laughter of our little company. Jackson himself alone did not participate in the boisterous mirth. Looking me straight in the face with his large expressive eyes, and pressing my hand warmly across the table as just the faintest smile broke over his features, he said, "Never care, Major, for Stuart's jokes; we understand each other, and I am proud of the friendship of so good a soldier and so daring a cavalier as you are." I was conscious of a blush reddening my cheeks under my beard at this, but I felt also a glow of pride, and I would not at that moment have exchanged the simple, earnest tribute of the great warrior for all the orders and crosses of honour of Europe. "Hurrah for Old Von! and now let us be off," said Stuart, and slapping me on the back to conceal his own slight embarrassment, he rose from the table, followed by his companions. In a few minutes we rode off at a gallop to fresh scenes of excitement and activity.

In Virginia the vicissitudes of temperature are great and sudden, the weather frequently changing from biting frost to genial warmth in a few hours; and we experienced this pleasant alternation as we rode forth into the brilliant sunshine of the clear November morning. To avoid the disagreeable

passage of the river by swimming our horses, General Stuart had determined to cross higher up, where the Shenandoah might be forded without difficulty, and so we continued our ride through the rich country on the left bank, passing the pleasant little hamlet of White Post on our route, until mid-day, when we made an easy ford, and soon after partook of a hasty dinner at a hospitable mansion most picturesquely situated on the very margin of the beautiful stream. Here I could not resist purchasing for our mess-table two of a flock of fat turkeys, which, tied together by the legs, I carried for a while thrown across the pommel of my saddle. The fowls gave me so much annoyance, however, by the flapping of their wings, that I was glad to give them in charge to one of our couriers, who quieted their motions very speedily by the simple expedient of cutting off their heads with his pocket-knife.

The son of the gentleman who entertained us at dinner, being thoroughly familiar with the bridlepaths across the mountains, offered himself as our guide to save us the long detour of the common highway, and his services were thankfully accepted. So we pursued our course along the rough mountain-side, but seldom touched by human foot, and, as we rode, enjoyed frequent opportunities of admiring the wild and wonderful scenery of the majestic Blue Ridge.

Climbing up steep banks and skirting dizzy precipices, we were often obliged to cut our way with our sabres through the dense entanglement of bushes and vines, many of the latter heavy with clusters of small dark-blue grapes. A rolling cannonade, borne to us from the direction of Ashby's Gap, hurried us on our toilsome and difficult way, and about five o'clock in the afternoon we reached the summit of the mountain. The view we obtained from this point was surely the most magnificent I have ever witnessed. For many, many miles beneath us lay the sumptuous valley, in the full gorgeousness of its rich and varied autumnal hues, spread out like an immense gaily-coloured Persian carpet, and through the middle space, like a stripe of green, ran the emerald-tinted Shenandoah, winding away to the remote distance where the plain was fringed by a range of wooded mountains, whose soft, waving line of horizon was reddened and gilded by the sunset. Our admiration of this glorious prospect gave place to something like bewildered astonishment when, immediately below us, only a few thousand feet from the spot we occupied, we discovered the dark masses of the enemy with glittering arms and fluttering pennons, and beyond them the rapidly-disappearing lines of our horsemen, the smoke rising at many points from the muzzles of our guns as the artillery covered the retreat of their

comrades. Stuart gave me a significant look, and said very quietly, "The Yankees have taken Ashby's Gap—Rosser is retreating, and we are completely cut off." Our situation was indeed full of danger. The enemy were so near us that we might expect to come upon one of their scouting-parties at any moment; our volunteer guide had no knowledge of the mountain-roads on our right; to procure other guides was a matter of great difficulty, as only a few herdsmen lived so high up on the mountain, and these would have been restrained by no sense of patriotic duty from betraying us into the hands of the Yankees; and to ride back to Jackson and join our horsemen again involved a circuitous and fatiguing journey of sixty or eighty miles, could we even make this without interruption. Yet it was of the utmost importance that Stuart should be with his command again before morning.

Meanwhile, as night was rapidly approaching, we recognised the necessity of coming to some conclusion, and it was finally determined that we should disperse over the ridge in various directions, in the hope that some one of our party might fall in with a mountaineer whom we should force to guide us, and that a whistle twice repeated should be the signal for reuniting at a point where Stuart himself should remain that he might watch closely the movements

of the enemy. After much unsuccessful riding about over the rocks and through the forest, I was fortunate enough to pick up a fellow of exceedingly wild and haggard appearance, with garments "all tattered and torn," who, upon my approach, endeavoured to slip away from me in the bushes, but who came to a better mind when he saw my revolver levelled at his head. At the appointed signal we soon came together again, when General Stuart explained to my trembling captive that if he would guide us over the mountains on our right to a point from which we could reach Barber's Cross Roads, the supposed new position of Fitz Lee's brigade, without bringing us in contact with the Yankees, he should receive an ample reward; but that should he intentionally mislead and betray us, he should be shot down without hesitation. Under the joint influence of fear and avarice, the poor devil became voluble with promises of fidelity, and we started at once on our hazardous march, one of us riding just before and another just behind the guide with cocked pistols, to prevent his escaping into the dense undergrowth on either side of the narrow path. In many places the road was barred by immense boulders or became too steep to ascend on horseback, so that we were compelled to dismount and lead our horses. The briars and brambles scratched our hands and faces, and made sad work with our uniforms,

The night had now deepened into great darkness, and we expected momentarily to lose our way or tumble over one of the frightful precipices along the verge of which we had to pass. But, surmounting all difficulties and escaping all dangers, we at last reached the foot of the Blue Ridge, near the small village of Macon, at a short distant from which place we saw a large camp-fire, and in the glare of the flames discovered a group of soldiers around it. We halted, of course, at once, and with a proper precaution sent forward on foot one of our couriers to ascertain whether the men before us were friends or foes. After a few minutes of extreme anxiety on our part, the courier came back with the pleasing intelligence that all was right, as the picket in sight consisted of soldiers belonging to the division of General D. H. Hill, who had retired in the direction of Front Royal, but was still holding Manassas Gap. Dr Eliason being now fully acquainted with the neighbourhood, we dismissed our mountaineer, who evinced great delight when General Stuart handed him a fifty-dollar note for his services.

The perils of our journey, however, were by no means yet over, as we had still a long distance to ride outside our own, and very near the enemy's, lines, whose numerous camp-fires were often plainly to be seen on the mountain-side; but after our ad-

vance-guard of two couriers had several times brought us to a halt through false alarms, and, blinded by the intense darkness of the night, had fired again and again at imaginary Yankees, we arrived without further adventure, about midnight, at Barber's Cross Roads. Here we learned, to the surprise and indignation of General Stuart, that only one of our squadrons was on picket at the place, and that Colonel Rosser, with the rest of his brigade, had fallen back seven miles farther, to the immediate vicinity of the small town of Orleans. Wearied out by the fatigues of the day, I was just looking out for a suitable spot for my night's rest, when Stuart, who was in no good humour, called to me, saying, "Major, I desire that you will ride at once to Colonel Rosser, and order him to report to me instantly in person, leaving instructions for Lee's brigade to follow without delay, that we may be ready to receive the enemy at this place at daylight. I am determined not to retire without fighting, and shall give battle to the Yankees here to-morrow." Thinking of the fifteen long miles that my faithful but exhausted charger must yet perform, I started rather unwillingly and slowly; but I had not gone two hundred yards when a courier rode up to me with the message from Stuart to go on as rapidly as possible, regardless of the life of my horse. So I drove the spurs into his flanks,

and went off at a gallop through the dark pine-forests that skirted the road on either side, until I reached Orleans, and with some difficulty found the headquarters of Colonel Rosser. This officer was exceedingly annoyed at being aroused from his comfortable repose, having gone into bivouac under the impression that he had operated with great wisdom and circumspection. The urgency of my instructions, however, soon brought him into the saddle. His adjutants quickly conveyed the necessary orders to the regiments of his brigade, and the Colonel and I trotted off together ahead of the column to Barber's Cross Roads.

Rosser had been compelled, after a gallant resistance, to give way before the superior numbers of his assailants, having sent during the day reports to General Stuart by several couriers, all of whom had either missed their way or fallen into the hands of the enemy. Upon our arrival at the Cross Roads, we found Stuart, and our comrades of his Staff, wrapped in the profoundest slumber upon the portico of a small farmhouse. When I had succeeded in awakening my chief, and had taken due care of my horse, I drew my blankets closely around me, and, wearied with a ride of more than fifty miles, stretched my limbs on the hard ground, in the hope of gaining some refreshment for the inevitable rough work of the coming day.

5th November.—The bugle sounding to saddle cruelly cut short my slumbers with the dawn, and a few minutes afterwards we galloped up to Fitz Lee's brigade, which, according to orders, occupied its position on the cross road. We now found, to our inexpressible delight, that Hampton's brigade, which, having been detached to our infantry, had been separated from us during the past week, had also arrived on the spot; and the hearty welcome we gave them attested the new hope and confidence as to the issue of the impending conflict which their presence inspired.

General Hampton had been ordered to form the right wing of our line of battle, and I accompanied him upon a little reconnaissance to a slight eminence, from which we could narrowly watch the approach of the vast numbers of the enemy. With his battery he had two 15-pounder brass guns, imported by him from Europe at his own expense, that were remarkable for their long range and accuracy of aim, but were too heavy for flying artillery. These pieces, being at once placed in position at our point of survey, speedily commenced the fight, and their fire being energetically returned by the Yankees, there ensued a tremendous cannonade. Ere long Stuart joined us, with all the other members of his Staff, and our group of horsemen attracting the attention

of the enemy's artillerists, we were honoured forthwith with several cannon-balls, which came whistling high over our heads, and gave us small concern. Suddenly, however, a percussion shell whizzed very close to us, and, striking a small locust-tree at a distance of about twenty yards, sent its iron hail right into the midst of our party. We looked at each other with startled apprehension, scarcely deeming it possible but that some one of our number had been struck. In the most wonderful way all had escaped. My horse was the only sufferer, as one of the fragments of the shell had cut a deep gash in his right hind-leg. Finding that fortunately no bone or sinew had been injured, I stanched the wound by tying my pocket-handkerchief around the limb, and I was thus able to ride my brave animal, despite his lameness, throughout the day.

The fight soon became very spirited, and our sharpshooters repulsed with great success and fatal effect the repeated charges of the Federal cavalry. One squadron of the Yankees especially was severely punished for their audacity in charging up the turnpike road upon a strong barricade which we had hastily erected. In front they were received with a most destructive fire, while a detachment of our horse attacked them at the same moment in the rear, sabring or taking prisoners the larger number of

these dashing dragoons. The enemy continuing to be largely reinforced from time to time, General Stuart gave about mid-day the order for the retreat towards Orleans, which was commenced under the heaviest fire of the enemy's batteries. Here occurred a very curious incident. One of the horsemen of our retiring column was so instantaneously killed by a bullet through the brain, that his rapidly-stiffening limbs held him for a considerable time in the saddle, and he was sitting bolt upright upon his horse dead —stone dead—several minutes before his comrades on the right and left discovered that he had been struck. Frequently upon our retreat our pursuers pressed us so closely that we were compelled to turn round and engage them hand to hand; but they came at last to a halt, so that upon reaching Orleans we had an hour to rest the men and feed the horses. General Stuart and Staff were invited to dinner at a stately old country-house, half a mile from the village, where dwelt a venerable lady, Mrs M., whose native dignity of manner and kindliness of disposition greatly won our respect and gratitude. The following day this house was occupied by the Yankees, and a detachment of the New York Zouaves acted towards its inmates with the greatest barbarity. After the greater portion of the furniture had been broken to pieces and completely destroyed by them

in mere wanton malice, one of these brutes demanded of the old lady where she had hid her silver, and upon her answering him quietly that it had been long ago sent to a place of safety, struck her a blow with the butt of his musket, under which she fell senseless into the arms of her daughters.

Throughout the afternoon we continued our retreat towards Waterloo Bridge, which we crossed at night, and in the vicinity of which our troops bivouacked. The General and Staff proceeded a mile farther on, and established their headquarters at the house of a Mr M., where we had at last an opportunity of cooking and devouring the turkeys of which mention has been made. Mr M.'s house was a few days later burned by the Yankees for the hospitality he had shown us.

During the night there came a telegram for General Stuart, which, in accordance with his instructions, habitually observed by me, I opened with his other despatches, and found to contain the most painful intelligence. It announced the death of little Flora, our chief's lovely and dearly-loved daughter, five years of age, the favourite of her father and of his military family. This sweet child had been dangerously ill for some time, and more than once had Mrs Stuart summoned her husband to Flora's bedside; but she received only the response of the true

soldier, "My duty to the country must be performed before I can give way to the feelings of the father." I went at once to acquaint my General with the terrible tidings, and when I had awakened him, perceiving from the grave expression of my features that something had gone wrong, he said, "What is it, Major? Are the Yankees advancing?" I handed him the telegram without a word. He read it, and the tenderness of the father's heart overcoming the firmness of the warrior, he threw his arms around my neck, and wept bitter tears upon my breast. My dear General never recovered from this cruel blow. Many a time afterwards, during our rides together, he would speak to me of his lost child. Light-blue flowers recalled her eyes to him; in the glancing sunbeams he caught the golden tinge of her hair; and whenever he saw a child with such eyes and hair, he could not help tenderly embracing it. He thought of her even on his deathbed, when, drawing me towards him, he whispered, "My dear friend, I shall soon be with little Flora again."

6th and 7th November.—The morning of the following day, to our great surprise, passed quietly, and we were enabled to take up our old line of defence at Waterloo Bridge, sending out scouts and patrols in the direction of the enemy. One of the latter was fortunate enough to capture and bring off a Yankee

waggon, which gave us a good supply of Havana cigars, and contained, among other articles, a large number of fine bowie-knives. For a long time afterwards, each of us carried one of these knives in his belt, finding it extremely serviceable, not as an offensive weapon against the Yankees, but for the cutting of the very tough beef which, during the next month, formed the greater part of our rations. The bowie-knife occupied a somewhat conspicuous place in the earlier annals of the war, and we were often told of Louisianians, Mississippians, and Texans who threw away their muskets in the hottest of the fight, and fell upon the enemy with their favourite weapon; but I have always regarded these stories in the same fabulous light with the stories of the bayonet conflicts to which I have before referred, and certainly I have never seen the bowie-knife put to any other than a purely pacific and innocent use.

About mid-day we went across the river with one of our squadrons on a reconnaissance, and very soon afterwards met the advancing column of the enemy, which attacked us vigorously, and, to the great mortification of General Stuart and myself, drove our men in disgraceful stampede, despite all our efforts to prevent it, back over the bridge. Here our pursuers were checked by the fire of our artillery and sharpshooters, and the fight ere long raged with full fury

all along the lines, being kept up, especially in the vicinity of the bridge, with great spirit until late in the evening. At dusk, General Stuart decided to continue the retreat. The bridge, having been prepared with combustibles for this event, was set on fire, and its blazing timbers fell with a loud crash into the waters of the Rappahannock as our column turned off in the direction of Jefferson. This hamlet, which lay eight miles distant towards Culpepper Court-house, we reached soon after dark. Here, as the enemy did not follow up the pursuit, our troops bivouacked after the necessary pickets had been established.

The night was extremely cold, and about ten o'clock a snow-storm set in with such severity that the General and his Staff took refuge in a deserted old wooden house, where, having with great trouble collected the fuel, we built immense wood-fires in the tumble-down chimneys. But we obtained little sleep. The storm raged all night; and as it howled around the dilapidated building, it made every rafter shake so threateningly that we looked for the edifice to fall in ruins about our heads at any moment, while the wind swept in wrath through the windows, wholly destitute of glass, bringing the snow in swirls into the cheerless apartments, which were so densely filled at times with smoke driven down the chimneys

that we had to beat a rapid retreat into the tempest to escape suffocation. At daybreak the temperature became a little less severe, but a fine rain was now mingled with the snow, which soon wet us to the skin, and rendered the roads slippery and horrible in the extreme. It may be imagined that our horsemen did not make a very proud appearance when our columns drew up to meet the advance of the enemy. Men and horses were muddy, draggled, and shivering, and both had been twenty-four hours without food.

The Yankees did not long keep us waiting for their attack, and at ten o'clock the fight was fully in progress, making us quite warm enough. Our resistance, however, was but a short one. General Stuart feared the rising of the Hazel river in his rear, and our artillery horses were scarcely able any longer to pull the guns through the miry roads. So greatly were we embarrassed on this account, that we had been obliged already to bury two of our pieces which we could not carry with us. . . About noon we again commenced the retreat, turning round and giving battle to the enemy whenever we were hard pressed by them. Late in the evening we reached the river, which we forded safely, but with some difficulty, and took a new position on the heights of the opposite shore, near the small village of Rixeville.

It was a sorry sight this crossing of the Hazel river. Our command, and especially Fitz Lee's brigade, had suffered severely from the continuous marching and fighting we had undergone, from the inclement wintry weather, and from scarcity of food. Many of our horses had been killed, and many more, broken down or lame, could only be led along. All the sick and disabled men, making up a body of nearly 500 non-combatants, were formed together into a corps which was jokingly called "Company Q," and had been put in charge of Fitz Lee's gallant quartermaster, Major Mason. I felt no little anxiety until I saw the last of this large squad of limping men, leading crippled horses, safely on the other side of the river. I had often to urge the stragglers along by saying, "The Yankees are close upon you," when they lingered to pluck the fruit of the numerous persimmon trees on either side of the road—fruit which the recent frosts had brought plentifully to perfection, and which furnished a welcome though meagre repast to our famished troopers.*

* The persimmon tree grows very abundantly in Virginia, and its fruit resembles somewhat the European medlar or the Asiatic date. In the green state the persimmon is exceedingly acrid and astringent, but it becomes mellowed by successive frosts, and in winter its taste is sweet and palatable. Very good beer is made from it, and the kernels were frequently employed by us in the preparation of a wretched substitute for coffee. The North Carolina troops were often "chaffed" by their comrades from other

The Yankees not making their appearance on the opposite bank of the Rappahannock, we left behind several squadrons and two pieces of artillery to guard the two nearest fords, and went at nightfall with the main body of our troops a few miles farther back, establishing our bivouac in a dense forest of oak and pine. The night set in cold again, and the rain changed to a heavy fall of snow, giving us every prospect of a most uncomfortable time of it. But the accustomed wood-fire, with its immense pile of blazing logs, around which the General and Staff and escort collected, kept us sufficiently warm. The bivouac itself was exceedingly picturesque. Many of the officers were enveloped in red blankets, worn in the Mexican fashion, falling from the shoulders, with a hole cut in the middle for the head of the wearer to come through. Others wore long overcoats, and wide-brimmed hats pulled over their faces. Among these groups were the negroes preparing supper; around us was the dark engirdling forest, the branches of the nearest trees white with the snow; and over all was thrown the rich red glow of the fire, producing the highest effects of light and shade.

States for being so fond of persimmons—a taste they had in common with the negroes and that remarkable animal the Virginia opossum, which is always fattest when the persimmon season is at its height.

The never-failing prevision of my negro servant William supplied our evening repast with some excellent Irish potatoes, which he had contrived to pick up somewhere on the road, and which he roasted in such a manner as to produce a very pleasing result.

One of our couriers, whom we had sent off to the post-office at Culpepper Court-house, came in after supper, bringing me the first letters I had received from home since my departure for America. Stretched out upon the damp ground, I became so much absorbed in reading them by the fitful glare of the fire, that my blanket caught from the embers without my perceiving it, and was in rapid combustion when Stuart called out to me, "Von, what are you doing there? Are you going to burn yourself like an Indian widow?"

8th, 9th, and 10th November.—Early the following morning we left our beds of mud and snow, and moved to the Hazel river, where we awaited the further approach of the enemy in line of battle, on the high hills which line the Culpepper shore near Rixeville. But everything remaining perfectly quiet, Stuart and myself crossed the river to look after the enemy, whom we found to be encamped near Jefferson, manifesting no intention of a further advance. Having satisfied ourselves upon this, we at once returned to our command, the greater part of which

was ordered back to the camp of the past night, only a few squadrons and some pieces of artillery being left behind to resist a sudden attack on the fords. Our pickets were thrown forward at the same time two miles on the opposite side of the river.

Our headquarters waggons having arrived meanwhile, and it appearing most likely that our stay in this part of the country would be of considerable duration, we pitched our tents on the edge of an oak wood, and our encampment was soon laid out in regular order. General Lee with the greater part of his army, had now arrived, and had gone into camp in the vicinity of Culpepper Court-house, General Longstreet, with his whole corps, having reached there several days before, followed by Jackson, who had left behind only one of his divisions under D. H. Hill, near Front Royal.

General Stuart went off next day on a little reconnaissance to Brandy Station and Rappahannock Bridge, but for once I did not accompany him, being detained in camp by domestic duties, arranging the interior of my tent, and building the customary fireplace and mud chimney. For the transportation of materials we employed our well-known yellow van captured from the Yankees, to which Pelham and I each harnessed one of our horses. The first time we

attached the team, I had occasion to witness with indignation and punish with severity the brutal conduct of Pelham's negro Willis, who, at the moment my horse was making the greatest efforts to pull our heavily-laden waggon out of a mud-hole, struck him in a paroxysm of anger over the head with a hatchet, felling the poor animal to the ground, where it lay for several minutes apparently lifeless. I was fortunately near enough to reward the scoundrel's barbarity at once with his own horsewhip.

General Stuart returned in the evening, in time for our slender dinner of coffee and baked potatoes, telling us that on his way back he had called at the headquarters of General Lee, and received orders for going off the next day on a reconnaissance in force. He was to take with him Fitz Lee's brigade, one battery, and two regiments of infantry, the latter having been detached to him for this special purpose. We were roused at daybreak next morning by the roll of the drums of our reinforcements, and at eight o'clock we crossed Hazel river, sending one regiment of cavalry to the right towards Jefferson, and proceeding with the main column to the left towards the village of Emmetsville. About ten o'clock our advanced-guard came up with the enemy, with whom we were soon hotly engaged, the Yankees falling back slowly before us. I could not help

admiring on this occasion the excellent behaviour of a squadron of the 5th New York Cavalry, who received with the greatest coolness the heavy fire of our battery, maintaining perfect order while shell after shell exploded in their ranks, and saddle after saddle was emptied—quietly filling the gaps in their lines, and finally only giving way when we charged them with several squadrons.

During the earlier part of the fight the Federals had been wholly without artillery, but several batteries now came to their assistance, opening a vigorous and well-directed fire upon our guns, which lost heavily in men and horses. I had halted near two of our pieces, and was talking with Lieutenant M'Gregor, the officer in command of them, when a shell, bursting within thirty feet of us, sent its deadly missiles in every direction, several fragments of the iron passing directly between us, and one of them shattering the leg of the brave young fellow so that it dangled loosely from his side. He insisted, however, on remaining with his guns, and it required the joint persuasions of General Stuart and myself to induce him to withdraw from the field and place himself in the hands of the surgeon.

Our infantry now joining in the fight, we drove the Yankees back to the neighbourhood of Emmetsville, when I was ordered by my chief to reconnoitre

the position there before he could attempt pushing his success further. Climbing a high hill about a mile on our right, I soon obtained a magnificent view of the surrounding country, extending for many miles towards the town of Warrenton, where numerous encampments indicated the presence of the entire Federal army. In the immediate front, towards Emmetsville, I could see the force opposing us about being reinforced by three brigades of infantry and several batteries of artillery, which were advancing at a double-quick along the turnpike road. In full haste I galloped back to inform General Stuart of the danger of his position, but before reaching him I saw our troops falling back, my chief having himself quickly perceived the additional strength of his opponents.

The enemy's tirailleurs were now moving rapidly forward in admirable order, and by their spirited and accurate fire greatly harassed the retreat of our troops, which was covered by two pieces of our artillery and our cavalry sharpshooters. Stuart, seeing his cavalrymen rapidly driven back, and greatly provoked at the successful advance of the foe, called to him twenty-five or thirty of our infantry riflemen, and posted them at the corner of a wood, with orders not to fire until the enemy had arrived within two hundred yards of them, that they might punish

effectively the impudence of the Yankees, as he called it. Stuart here, as usual, greatly exposed his own person on horseback, by riding out of the wood into the open field, and I felt it my duty to say to him that in my opinion he was not in his proper place, as in a few minutes the whole fire of the enemy would be concentrated upon him; but as J. E. B. was in a very bad humour, he answered me curtly, that if this place seemed likely to become too hot for myself, I was at liberty to leave it; whereupon I made response, that, my duty attaching me to his side, no place could be too hot for me where he chose to go. Nevertheless I changed my position, cautiously bringing a large tree, in front of which I had been standing, between myself and the enemy. In an instant the firing commenced, and three bullets struck the tree at just the height to show that, had I remained where I was, they would certainly have gone through my body. Looking at Stuart, I saw him pass his hand quickly across his face, and even at this serious moment I could not help laughing heartily when I discovered that one of the numberless bullets that had been whistling round him had cut off half of his beloved mustache as neatly as it could have been done by the hand of an experienced barber.

The Yankees having kept up the pursuit for only

a short distance, we continued our retreat quietly towards Hazel river. Altogether our reconnaissance had been highly successful. We had found out all we desired to know without much loss, while we had inflicted serious damage upon the enemy, and brought back with us thirty prisoners. Being ordered by General Stuart to report immediately to General Lee what had been done, I galloped rapidly ahead, about dusk, passing *en route* our headquarters, where those who had been left behind came running towards me to get news of the fighting, which I gave them in a condensed form, "All right!" and hurried onward without stopping. With some trouble I found General Lee's encampment on the opposite side of the town, where his modest tents had been pitched in a dense pine thicket. Supper was announced just as I arrived, and, having accepted the General's kindly invitation to join him at the table, I there recited to an eager audience our recent adventures. The Commander-in-Chief and the members of his Staff were all greatly amused at the loss of half of Stuart's mustache, a personal ornament upon which they knew our cavalry leader much prided himself. It was late at night when I got back again to our headquarters, where Stuart and my comrades of his Staff had arrived long before me.

CHAPTER XIII.

CAMP-LIFE AT HEADQUARTERS NEAR CULPEPPER COURT-HOUSE —TEN DAYS IN RICHMOND—RETURN TO HEADQUARTERS —A DISAGREEABLE JOURNEY—BURNSIDE'S CHANGE OF BASE—HEADQUARTERS NEAR FREDERICKSBURG—DESCRIPTION OF THE TOWN—DANGER OF OUR ENGLISH VISITOR —OPOSSUM-HUNTING.

ALL was quiet next day at headquarters, and we had the pleasure of seeing there Mrs Stuart, who had arrived at Culpepper Court-house the previous evening. She had come to spend some days with her husband, to share with him her sacred grief in the calamity that had befallen them both. It was a melancholy pleasure to see how well that admirable lady bore up under the weight of her affliction, in tender regard for her husband. Her manner was composed, but her eyes betrayed their frequent overflow of tears; and the warm pressure of the hand she silently gave me upon our meeting, indicated that words could not describe the agony she had endured. Mrs Stuart had brought with

her to camp her son Jemmy, a stout little "three-year-old," who, in his vivacity, in his passion for horses, and in his whole appearance, strongly resembled his father. Whenever his mother or his negro "mammy" left him unguarded for a moment, Jemmy was immediately among the horses; and the greatest gratification I could give him was to take him for a rapid gallop before me in the saddle. During the morning General Lee came over to our camp on a short visit, and I was touched by the gentle, sympathising way in which he talked with Mrs Stuart. Our friend Lawley having announced by telegram his coming in this day's train from Richmond, I drove over to the station at Culpepper Court-house to meet so welcome a guest, who had promised to give us the pleasure of his company for several days. To do him proper honour, I substituted on this occasion for the rough-going, yellow-painted waggon in which Pelham and I were accustomed to make most of our journeys, a top-buggy which Stuart had brought from Pennsylvania.

On the 12th the General started on a reconnaissance "to stir up the Yankees a little," as he expressed himself, in which he was accompanied by Lawley, who desired to get an idea of our mode of cavalry fighting. My orders were

to remain at headquarters in the performance of some important duties there. I disliked this exceedingly, but I was soon compensated by the unexpected arrival of Vizetelly and Brien, who, after a very amusing ride through the valley and across the Blue Ridge, had at last found us again, and came into the encampment with the outburst of "Dixie," sung to new words, the composition of the versatile Vizetelly himself. Most heartily were these guests welcomed by the whole camp. The negroes especially were greatly pleased to greet "Major Telly" (a name and title they had adopted for the artist) once more at headquarters. During the evening General Stuart returned from his "stirring-up" expedition, which had been so successful that he brought back with him about thirty prisoners, among whom were several officers.

Dinner was soon after served, and though poor in viands it was rich in good fellowship, in mirth and anecdote and song. On this excursion, of which we had animated accounts from Stuart and Lawley, Captain Farley had executed another of those daring feats for which he was so famous, and the recital of it called forth the highest compliments of our whole dinner-party. Riding forward alone, as was his custom, through the woods in the direction of the enemy, he discovered a

regiment of Federal infantry marching along the road, and observed the colonel and adjutant making a little detour to a neighbouring plantation-house, doubtless in the hope of obtaining eatables for themselves or forage for their horses. As soon as they had dismounted and entered the dwelling, Farley rode up, and, confronting the astonished officers with his revolver, said, "Gentlemen, you are my prisoners; make the least outcry to your men for assistance and I will blow your brains out." The brave colonel and adjutant, finding it was the best they could do, surrendered at discretion; and Farley brought them quietly into our lines, with their excellent and well-equipped horses, away from their regiment, which was marching along at a distance of only a few hundred yards. The astonishment of the regiment at this sudden and inexplicable disappearance of its commander may be imagined.

Fitzhugh and I having been invited to supper with Captain Dearing, a friend of ours commanding a battery of Pickett's division in Longstreet's corps, who was encamped about two miles off, started on foot, late in the evening, for this entertainment, and after losing ourselves in the darkness, and getting our boots full of water in a swamp, at last reached the camp of the gay artilleryman,

where we found large company and little supper. The "spread," indeed, consisted only of a small piece of pork and a canteen of bad apple-brandy; but wit and good-humour make amends for the lack of dishes, and our songs re-echoed through the adjoining forests. Dearing soon proposed that we should send a courier for Bob Sweeney and his banjo, which was carried *nem. con.;* and before half an hour had elapsed, the joyous minstrel occupied the post of honour upon the large mess-chest at our great camp-fire, and the music of the banjo, the songs of the bivouac, and the dances of the negroes, amused us till a late hour, when we returned on Dearing's horses to our headquarters.*

On Sunday the 14th, General Stuart said to me that, as all was quiet along the lines, he wished me to go to Richmond for a few days on some matters of business. As I had never once asked for leave of absence since the commencement of my eventful campaigning, the General, at my request, very readily

* Captain Dearing, who was a very gallant and distinguished officer of artillery, was transferred at a later period of the war to the cavalry. He became the colonel of a North Carolina cavalry regiment, and soon afterwards a general of brigade, in which position he gained a high reputation for daring enterprise and celerity of movement. A Federal bullet ended at once his brilliant military career and his life, in one of the fights near Petersburg, a short time before the termination of the struggle.

extended the term of my sojourn at the capital to ten days. Brien and Vizetelly having determined to accompany me, the gay trio soon rolled along in one of the most uncomfortable of railway carriages to our place of destination, where we arrived the same evening, and took lodgings at the well-known Spotswood Hotel. My personal appearance, after so long a period of rough service in the field, was somewhat out of repair for the streets of the metropolis. I looked, indeed, more like a bandit than a Staff officer. There were several large holes for ventilation in my hat, my coat was full of rents, and my riding-boots were soleless, so that, having worn for some time past my last pair of socks, my naked feet now touched the pavement as I walked. Not desiring to exhibit myself in this plight to the good people of Richmond, I was obliged to spend the greater part of the following day in my room, until my tailor could make me presentable again. The effect of dress upon the outward man has very often been dwelt upon by worldly philosophers. When, in my new externals, I met Vizetelly in the afternoon, he barely recognised me, and assured me, with many polite bows, that he had not supposed it possible that I could have changed so much for the better.

I found Richmond very little altered; especially

had its generous hospitality known no abatement. I was received in many houses with a cordial welcome. Of course, I did not fail to pay my respects to General and Mrs Randolph, who listened with the most flattering interest to the account of my adventures, and manifested their astonishment at my rapid progress in the English language. Very pleasant hours I spent at the charming residences of Mr P. and Mr W. H. M. With dinner-parties and business engagements, the time passed swiftly by, and I could scarcely believe that I had spent so long an interval of social enjoyment when the day of my departure arrived.

I had packed my portmanteau and taken leave of my kind friends of both sexes in Richmond, and the negro waiter at the Spotswood Hotel had just left my room, promising, with a grin upon his swarthy face, that I should certainly be called in time for the early train the following morning, when a telegram was brought me from General Stuart, ordering me to proceed by rail, not to Culpepper Court-house, as I had intended, but to the vicinity of Fredericksburg, to which place he was upon the eve of transferring his headquarters. General M'Clellan had already, on the 7th of November, been superseded as Federal Commander-in-Chief by General Burnside, who, ambitious of a glory that in his wild

dreams his exalted position seemed to promise him, and vehemently urged by the Government at Washington to rouse himself from his inactivity, and undertake something conclusive with his largely reinforced and splendidly equipped army, had decided to try the shortest and most direct route to the long-coveted Confederate capital. Accordingly the new commander had moved the greater part of his force by rapid marches down the Rappahannock towards Fredericksburg, hoping to cross the river and occupy the town before Lee should be able to divine his intentions. But Mr Burnside had not counted on the vigilance of Stuart's cavalry, the untiring activity of our scouts, and the promptness of decision that belonged to our noble leader; and when he arrived opposite Fredericksburg, demanding, in grand words, the surrender of the place, he found Longstreet, to his great surprise, seriously objecting to this,—Longstreet who, by a movement parallel to his own, had reached the spot with his corps several hours too early for him. Whereupon the Federal General was fain, after many useless threats to shell the town, to postpone yet a little while his rapid "On to Richmond," thus giving General Lee time to move his whole force towards Fredericksburg, where, at the end of November, the two hostile armies were confronting each other.

This change of base gave me one day's longer leave of absence, as I could reach the vicinity of Fredericksburg by rail in twenty-four hours' less time than Stuart by marching across the country. There being nothing to detain me in Richmond, I took advantage of my additional holiday to visit my dear friends, Dr P—— and his family, at Dundee, near Hanover Court-house, where I passed Sunday the 22d most delightfully, continuing my journey next day to Hanover Junction, which point I reached unfortunately too late for the passenger-train to Fredericksburg. Being thus compelled to take a freight train, and to ride in an open flat, I felt the sharp, eager wintry air intensely. The train moved at a very slow pace, stopping at every little wayside station, so that it was late at night when we arrived at Hamilton's Crossing, the last stopping-place before reaching Fredericksburg. Here we were obliged to bring the train to rest a quarter of a mile from the station, as it was within range of the enemy's guns, and the Yankees shelled it furiously whenever they heard the sound of an engine. I was thus landed in utter darkness in the depths of the forest, and found myself soon sitting on my portmanteau, with every reasonable prospect that I should remain in this position until morning. Fortunately there were a number of Confederate surgeons, who, having been

released from the different hospitals within the enemy's lines, were *en route* to report again to their respective commands, and had left the train under the same unhappy circumstances with myself; and as a common misfortune always quickly unites those who are casually thrown together, it was not long before we were assisting each other in removing our luggage to a fire which at some distance glimmered through the woods. Here, to our great satisfaction, we found the camp of a quartermaster of the army, who was able to give us all the information we desired, and very promptly rendered us every assistance. As the bulk of our army was three or four miles, and Stuart's headquarters at least five miles distant, and we had no means of transportation, we determined to rest here for the night, and readily availed ourselves of a large tent-fly which the quartermaster was kind enough to offer us, beneath which we were soon sufficiently comfortable—each member of the party contributing, from the stores brought with him, to a supper that might have been called luxurious. The next morning we contrived to get hold of an ambulance, and made an early start on our roundabout journey to the different positions of our troops. My point of destination being the most distant, I had to wait until the last of my pleasant companions had reached his special command before I could turn the

horses' heads directly to Stuart's headquarters, which I gained not until a late hour of the forenoon.

Our camp was situated in a small piece of pine-woods about five miles from Fredericksburg, on the Telegraph Road leading from that place to Richmond. The white tents gleamed pleasantly amid the dense umbrage of the evergreen pines; straight into the frosty air rose the columns of blue smoke from many chimneys, and the whole encampment wore so snug and comfortable an appearance, that it was far from affording me the least suggestion of the cold and hunger I should yet have to endure on this very spot. I had scarcely climbed out of the ambulance, the news of my arrival having been rapidly circulated through the camp, when comrades and couriers, Stuart foremost of them all, hastened to welcome me. My chief was so much delighted at my return that he threw his arms around my neck in a transport of affection, and the general manner of my reception greatly heightened the happiness I felt in being once more with my dear companions-in-arms. My tent had been already pitched; in the large chimney of it a generous fire was in full blaze, and I had no sooner entered my new abode than I felt entirely at home in it. But I had scarcely time to deposit my luggage and hang up my arms, when Stuart's ringing voice summoned me to his ample tent, which boasted,

besides many little internal comforts, the phenomenal adjunct of two chimneys, and of which my chief seemed to be as proud as an Indian nabob of his sumptuous palace. Here all the members of the Staff soon gathered around me, and many more questions were asked of me in a few minutes than I could answer in an hour. The greater part of these questions referred to the pretty and accomplished young ladies I had seen in Richmond, the very mention of whose names caused the hearts of several of my younger comrades to beat quicker than the excitement of the field of battle. Dinner followed without loss of time; then came Sweeney with his banjo, and dancing with the music; and again I enjoyed the harmless, careless gaiety of our camp-life to the top of my bent. Late in the evening we had the pleasure of greeting our friends, Messrs Lawley and Vizetelly, for whom a tent was pitched at once, and whom, by dint of blankets and a roaring wood-fire, we endeavoured to make as comfortable as possible in the severe season of frost that was upon us. Nevertheless I had a hearty laugh the next morning, when, looking for our guests, I found my friend Lawley running up and down before his tent, shivering with cold, and trying, by the addition of a few sticks which he had collected one by one, to bring a large pile of wood into blaze. The wood

long resisted his efforts to fan it into lively combustion, but a cup of hot coffee and a hearty breakfast in Stuart's double-chimneyed tent soon brought him into a sufficiently genial state to accept my invitation to drive Vizetelly and himself down to Fredericksburg, to take a good look at the town and at our Yankee friends on the opposite side of the river. So the celebrated yellow waggon, with two of my chargers hitched to it, was soon in readiness, and after an hour's drive, amid the plaintive outcries of my victims as we rattled along over the rough frozen road, we reached the elevated ridge in front of the town, from which we had an excellent view of the town itself, the valley wherein it is situated, and the white tents and swarming numbers of the enemy on the heights across the Rappahannock.

Fredericksburg, one of the oldest places in Virginia, was before the war a pretty town of about 5000 inhabitants, which enjoyed a considerable local trade, and was distinguished for the hospitality and refinement that belonged to its society. It was now comparatively deserted. The larger part of its citizens had been driven off by the continued threats of bombardment which had hung like a Damocles's sword above their heads for several weeks, and the few who had been compelled to remain behind plainly exhibited in their features that the apprehen-

sion of doom was pressing like an iron weight upon their hearts. The knowledge on their part that more than a hundred hostile cannon, planted on the dominating "Shepherd's Heights" of Stafford, over the river, bore directly on their unfortunate town, might well have given disquietude to this community of non-combatants. A lively contrast was presented, however, in the demeanour of Barksdale's Mississippi Brigade, stationed at Fredericksburg, the men of which were wandering carelessly about, talking and laughing, as if there were no Yankees within the radius of a thousand miles from them, or making themselves at home in several of the largest houses which had been quite converted into barracks. As the river was not more than 200 yards wide, we could distinctly see each one of the numerous Yankee sentinels who were pacing to and fro in their light-blue overcoats on the opposite bank, and who frequently engaged in amicable conversation with their adversaries across the stream, as it had been agreed that the firing by pickets at each other should be stopped for the time as a useless waste of ammunition. The Federals and Confederates were still nearer together at the site of the railway bridge which had been burnt at an earlier period of the war, leaving on either side the dismantled abutments and the timbers, extending to one or two piers, which

were occupied by pickets; and I could not help feeling some solicitude for the safety of Vizetelly, who had quietly seated himself and was making a sketch of the ruins of the viaduct and of the Stafford shore, a picture which afterwards appeared in the 'London Illustrated News.' We were very soon at no loss to discover that the Yankees were under the impression that one of our engineers was drawing a plan of their position and fortifications, for we could see them talking together in suspicious groups; and after a little time several officers came up, who viewed our unconscious artist narrowly through their field-glasses; and had he not opportunely retired, at my instance, to a less exposed situation, a bullet from one of their sharpshooters would doubtless have demonstrated the impropriety or insecurity of his labours.

On our return we made a little detour to the head-quarters of General Jenkins of South Carolina, commanding a brigade of troops from the Palmetto State in Longstreet's corps, who received us very courteously, and insisted on our dining with him—an invitation which, after some hesitation, we accepted. Poor Jenkins met with a sad fate, after having served through the greater part of the war with the greatest gallantry and distinction, and having reached the exalted rank of major-general, he was killed

through misadventure by his own men upon the same unhappy occasion when Longstreet was so severely wounded.

It was late at night when we got back to our own headquarters, and I was not able to persuade our weary guests to join in a grand opossum-hunt, which the negroes had arranged to carry on in the adjoining woods. Opossum-hunting is a favourite sport with the negroes, and they rarely fail to make sure of their game. The meat of this ugly animal, which grows very fat in the latter part of the autumn, is quite similar to pork. The hunters go out always at night, when the opossum comes forth from his hole in quest of food; and the dogs, which have been carefully trained for the purpose, follow up the scent until they have made out in which tree the frightened fugitive has taken refuge, and commence at once a most dismal howling at the foot. The tree is then cut down, and the opossum, which invariably simulates death, falls an easy prey into the clutches of his enemies. (This ruse of the animal in appearing to be dead gives rise to the well-known American phrase of "playing 'possum," when any one affects unconsciousness.) The stranger, unaccustomed to the manner of hunting the opossum, might suppose, from the horrible din that assails his ears—the blowing of horns, the yell of human voices, and the furi-

ous barking of the dogs—that the wild jäger of Germany, or some equally ferocious beast of the European forest, had come over on a visit to the backwoods of America. Very frequently in the opossum-hunt the dogs start a racoon, which more closely resembles the fox, and makes always a gallant fight, at times punishing his assailants severely.

CHAPTER XIV.

DISPOSITION OF OUR CAVALRY FORCE—PELHAM'S FIGHT WITH GUNBOATS — GREAT SNOWBALL ENGAGEMENT — ANOTHER ENGLISH VISITOR—AMUSEMENTS OF THE CAMP.

THE different brigades of our cavalry were now separated, guarding the numerous fords of the Rappahannock, which rendered necessary a picket-line of more than fifty miles in length. W. H. F. Lee's brigade was stationed on the Lower Rappahannock, near Port Royal; Fitz Lee's command, under Rosser, at a point some distance beyond our headquarters, at Spotsylvania Court-house; and Hampton's on the Upper Rappahannock, in Culpepper county. On the morning of the 27th November I galloped over to Rosser's headquarters upon some matters of business, which, having been duly transacted, the Colonel and I proceeded together to the estate of a neighbouring planter, Mr R., a noted fox-hunter, with whose hounds the officers of Fitz Lee's brigade, when duty would admit of it, were accustomed to engage in the exciting diversion of the chase. General

Stuart and his Staff had been invited by Mr R. to take part in a fox-hunt, the arrangements for which had been fully made, and we had looked forward to it with no little satisfaction; but our hopes in this direction were frustrated by the important events which pressed upon us.

Returning to our headquarters, I learned that Stuart had gone with Pelham to Port Royal, to drive off some of the enemy's gunboats which had ascended the river thus far with the view of forcing their way through to Fredericksburg; and next morning Dr Eliason and myself followed them, to take part in the engagement which was in all probability to come off. Being little acquainted with the country, however, we missed our way completely; and as it seemed too late to proceed farther, in complete uncertainty as to where we were going, and, moreover, as General Stuart was expected to return that same night, we resolved to retrace our steps to camp, taking Fredericksburg in our route. Here we stopped at the house of a well-known old wine-merchant, Mr A., with whom Dr Eliason was personally acquainted, and in whose cellar, after a good deal of tasting, we purchased for our mess two demijohns of excellent old madeira. We regretted very much, a few days later, that we had not laid in a larger supply of this capital wine, which was worthy of a happier destiny than to

fall into the hands of the Yankees. Getting back to camp, we were derided mercilessly by our companions of the Staff for having missed our way to Port Royal; but when next day we produced the madeira, there was an evident change in public opinion as to the ill-success of our expedition, and our little misadventure was set down as a most fortunate accident. Our purchase, indeed, met with a higher degree of appreciation than we had wished for, since, the news of it having been widely circulated, we had numerous visitors at camp; and several officers, whose names need not be given, plied the demijohns so industriously that we thought they would never be able to find their way back to their respective encampments.

On the morning of the 2d December I received by a courier information from Stuart that he had been unexpectedly detained at Port Royal, together with orders that I should join him there at once; so that I started a second time with my portly friend the doctor on our journey. It was a disagreeable ride enough. The cold was intense, the road rough, and the distance long. We had ridden already more than twenty miles, the icicles hanging from our beards and our horses' nostrils, when we met General Stuart returning to Fredericksburg. He laughed heartily at us for our former unsuccessful ride, and ordered us to turn back with him.

The fighting was over at Port Royal, and Pelham with his horse-artillery had met with his usual good fortune, inflicting much damage upon the enemy, and driving off the gunboats, which, from the narrowness of the stream and the height of the cliffs where our guns were posted, had scarcely been able to respond at all to the destructive fire which was pouring down upon them at so near a range. The return to camp was even more distressing than our ride of the morning, as a heavy snow-storm set in, which continued throughout the night; and we reached our headquarters, men and horses wet and chilled, and almost wearied out by a journey of more than forty miles.

The following morning we were enlivened by snowball fights, which commenced as skirmishes near our headquarters, but extended over the neighbouring camps, and assumed the aspect of general engagements. In front of our headquarters, beyond an open field of about half a mile square, Hood's division lay encamped in a piece of wood; in our immediate rear stretched the tents and huts of a part of M'Laws's division. Between these two bodies of troops animated little skirmishes had frequently occurred whenever there was snow enough on the ground to furnish the ammunition; but on the morning of the 4th, an extensive expedition having been undertaken by several hundred of M'Laws's

men against Hood's encampments, and the occupants of these finding themselves considerably disturbed thereby, suddenly the whole of the division advanced in line of battle, with flying colours, the officers leading the men, as if in real action, to avenge the insult. The assailants fell back rapidly before this overwhelming host, but only to secure a strong position, from which, with reinforcements, they might resume the offensive. The alarm of their first repulse having been borne with the swiftness of the wind to their comrades, sharpshooters in large numbers were posted behind the cedar bushes that skirt the Telegraph Road, and hundreds of hands were actively employed in erecting a long and high snow-wall in front of their extended lines. The struggle had now the appearance of a regular battle, with its charges and counter-charges — the wild enthusiasm of the men and the noble emulation of the officers finding expression in loud commands and yet louder cheering, while the air was darkened with the snowballs as the current of the fight moved to and fro over the well-contested field. Nearer and nearer it came towards our headquarters, and it was soon evident to us that the hottest part of the engagement would take place on our neutral territory. Fruitless were the efforts of Stuart and myself to assert and maintain the neutrality of our camp, utterly idle the

hoisting of a white flag; the advancing columns pressed forward in complete disregard of our signs and our outspoken remonstrances, clouds of snowballs passed across the face of the sun, and ere long the overwhelming wave of the conflict rolled pitilessly over us. Yielding to the unavoidable necessity which forbade our keeping aloof from the contest, Stuart and I had taken position, in order to obtain a view over the field of battle, on a big box, containing ordnance stores, in front of the General's tent, where we soon became so much interested in the result, and so carried away by the excitement of the moment, that we found ourselves calling out to the men to hold their ground, and urging them again and again to the attack, while many a stray snowball, and many a well-directed one, took effect upon our exposed persons. But all the gallant resistance of M'Laws's men was unavailing. Hood's lines pressed resistlessly forward, carrying everything before them, taking the formidable fortifications, and driving M'Laws's division out of their encampments. Suddenly, at this juncture, we heard loud shouting on the right, where two of Anderson's brigades had come up as reinforcements. The men of M'Laws's division, acquiring new confidence from this support, rallied, and in turn drove, by a united charge, the victorious foe in headlong flight back to their own camps and woods.

Thus ended the battle for the day, unhappily with serious results to some of the combatants, for one of Hood's men had his leg broken, one of M'Laws's men lost an eye, and there were other chance-wounds on both sides. This sham-fight gave ample proof of the excellent spirits of our troops, who, in the wet, wintry weather, many of them without blankets, some without shoes, regardless of their exposure and of the scarcity of provisions, still maintained their good-humour, and were ever ready for any sort of sport or fun that offered itself to them.

On the morning of the 5th, General Stuart and myself, with several other members of the Staff, again set out for Port Royal, where some of the Federal gunboats were renewing their demonstrations. The day was bitterly cold, and the road exceedingly slippery from the frost, so that the ride was anything but pleasant. All along our route we found our troops, chiefly those of Jackson's corps—Old Stonewall having established his headquarters midway between Fredericksburg and Port Royal, at the plantation of James Parke Corbin, Esq., known as "Moss Neck"—busily employed in throwing up fortifications, rendering our position as impregnable as it afterwards proved itself to be. They had greatly improved the highway also, erected lines of telegraphic communication to the headquarters of the

different corps of the army, and cut military roads through the woods to various points along our lines. It was late in the evening, and darkness had overtaken us, when we reached the charming country-seat of "Gaymont," within a short distance of our place of destination, where a most cordial hospitality was extended to us, and where, in the snug library, before a glorious wood-fire, we warmed our half-frozen limbs, and remained in delightful conversation with the ladies till a late hour of the night.

The following day it was reported by our scouts and patrols that the gunboats had disappeared. It was Sunday, and we spent it as a day of rest, in the most blissful quietude. On Monday morning we reluctantly took leave of our kind hosts, and started on a reconnaissance up the river with General D. H. Hill, who with his division formed the extreme right of our infantry lines, and occupied a position where a crossing of the stream offered every kind of advantage to the enemy, though, strange to relate, they never availed themselves of it. The Yankees were in plain view on the other side of the river, and were evidently very active in erecting fortifications, marching and countermarching small bodies of troops, and in communicating with other parts of their lines by signal-flags.

Night was far advanced when we returned to our

headquarters, where we found, to our great delight, a pleasant addition to our little military family in an English guest, Captain Phillips, of the Grenadier Guards, who was profiting by a short leave of absence from his battalion, stationed at the time in Canada, to witness some of the active operations of the war on our side. The next day there was a review of the South Carolina Brigade of General Jenkins, in an open field within half an hour's walk of our camp, and I had the gratification of taking our new guest to see it. General Jenkins received us with his habitual courtesy, and manifestly felt great pride in showing off his magnificent brigade, which consisted of about 3500 men, veterans who had participated in nearly all the great battles of the war. Captain Phillips was highly pleased with the appearance of the brigade, and the material of which it was composed, saying, that while they would not do for a parade in Hyde Park, with their motley uniforms and their style of marching, the men looked like work. One of the regiments, the Hampton Legion, raised at the breaking-out of the war by the distinguished patriot and soldier whose name it bore, carried a flag displaying many rents of shot and shell, which had been presented to it by Mrs Hampton, who, with her own fair hands, had made it out of a robe worn by her several years.

previous at a "Drawing-Room" of her Majesty Queen Victoria.

We accepted General Jenkins's kind invitation to dine with him at his headquarters, where we passed some most agreeable hours, and were sent back to our camp by the General on his own horses, Captain Phillips riding a superb animal, a bay, which had been presented by the State of South Carolina to her gallant son.

Desirous of amusing our guest, and of making our rough camp-life as agreeable to him as possible, we had secured invitations to a country ball which was to come off the night following at a small plantation, about ten miles distant, and for which we had promised to provide the music. Accordingly, about six o'clock the next evening, the very-frequently-before-mentioned yellow waggon was again brought out, and four spirited mules of the medical department of our headquarters were harnessed to it. Sweeney reported himself with his banjo and two fiddlers, and very soon the whole company, consisting of Captain Phillips, Major Pelham, Major Terrell, Captain Blackford, Lieutenant Dabney, and myself, with our musicians, were settled on the rough wooden planks which constituted the improvised seats of our carriage, and the carriage itself was in rapid motion. General

Stuart's mulatto servant Bob, who was to accompany the instrumental performance with his inimitable rattle of the bones, followed us with a led horse for Captain Phillips, in case the violent jarring of our vehicle should prove too much for one not accustomed to such rude transportation. As an expert driver I had taken the reins in my own hands, the mules being rather difficult to manage from having run off several times with their accustomed teamster. So we rattled along through the cold starlight night, waking the echoes of the woods with song, and creating a sensation in many encampments *en route*, from which the soldiers ran out and cheered us as we passed. All went well for a little time, when Major Terrell, who somewhat prided himself on his driving, proposed to take the reins—a change of position to which I consented the more readily, because I felt a great desire to unite in the animated conversation and merriment going on behind me. Our rate of progress now became greatly accelerated, and the rapid clatter of the hoofs of our fleet animals on the hard-frozen road, just covered with snow, struck pleasantly on the ear, as all began to partake of the agreeable excitement which great velocity of movement generally produces; when suddenly, with a loud crash and a heavy thump, the waggon, overturning, projected its inmates in various

directions fully ten paces out upon the snow. Fortunately for us, the mules, struck dumb with astonishment most probably at this unexpected turn in affairs, remained very quietly in their tracks, while the scattered members of our party gathered themselves up to examine into the extent of the disaster. Nobody having received serious injury, though all were more or less bruised, we were in condition to be diverted at the accident, and heartily to deride Major Terrell, who had managed to upset us by driving directly against a stump several feet in circumference and as many feet in height.

The waggon having marvellously escaped, to all appearance, without a fracture, it was soon set up again, and Major Terrell, not without some cavil, having been reinstated as driver, away we went on our journey not less rapidly than before. But the severe thump against the tremendous stump had been, alas! the *coup de grace* for the dear old yellow-painted Yankee van, which was to carry us no more. After creaking and groaning very painfully for a mile or two, the back part of it all at once gave way everywhere, landing us rudely once more on the snowy ground. Captain Blackford was the chief sufferer from the casualty, one of the wheels, which had been violently detached from the axletree by

the shock, having passed directly over his head, cutting so deep a gash in it that we had to employ all our pocket-handkerchiefs in making bandages to stanch the flow of blood. We were now no longer in a frame of mind to laugh over our misfortunes, for we were yet four miles from our place of destination; around us lay the wide forest of the Wilderness, with no human dwelling within striking distance, and above us was the intense wintry night. A return to camp was not to be thought of, as it would have subjected us to the endless ridicule of our comrades. A council of war was at once held over the ruins of the waggon. Our English guest, who had borne all the discomforts and mishaps of our journey with soldierly nonchalance, was left to decide upon our course, and his decision was that we should go on. Indeed, the unanimous vote of our party, including even poor wounded Captain Blackford, was to grin and bear it, and carry out the original expedition in the best way that we could manage. The two fore-wheels of the waggon, to which the mules still remained hitched, being uninjured, and securely connected by the axletree, Captain Phillips, Dabney, and myself seated ourselves on this narrow base; the four other gentlemen mounted the four mules, the musicians mounted the led horse, and so

this extraordinary caravan proceeded on its way. After an hour of torture, during which the headlong speed of our team over the rough plank-road had given to the sufferers on the axletree the sensation of riding on a razor, we reached the scene of the evening's festivity. The mansion was brilliantly lighted up, many fair ones had already assembled, and the whole company awaited, with impatience and anxiety, the arrival of their distinguished guests and the promised music. Sweeney lost no time in his orchestral arrangements. In a very few minutes the banjo vibrated under his master hand, the two fiddles shrieked in unison, and Bob's bones clattered their most hideous din; and in the animated beat of the music, and the lively measures of the dance, we soon forgot the little *désagrémens* of our journey. Our English captain entered into the fun quite as heartily as any of us. If there was no magnificent hall, with the light showering down from a thousand wax candles on the brilliant toilettes of Europe, to call forth our admiration, there were many pretty faces and sparkling eyes worth looking into; and it was quite delightful to see our foreign friend winding through the mazes of many bounding quadrilles and Virginia reels with an evident enjoyment of the same. After several hours of mirth and dancing,

we accepted the kind offer of our host to lend us one of his own waggons for our return to head-quarters, where we arrived a short time before day-break, little thinking how soon we should be aroused by the notes of a very different music from that of Sweeney's orchestra.

CHAPTER XV.

BOMBARDMENT OF FREDERICKSBURG—EVENTS PRECEDING THE BATTLE OF FREDERICKSBURG.

11*th December.*—I had enjoyed but a few minutes of repose, enveloped in my warm blankets, when I was waked from sleep by a dull heavy noise, which, in the earliest moments of consciousness, I believed to have been produced by the thawing and sliding down of the snow that had accumulated on the top of my tent. I was quickly undeceived, however, by my negro servant Henry, who, appearing at my tent door, informed me in a single abrupt sentence of the true condition of affairs. "Major," said Henry, "de Yankees is shelling Fredericksburg. I done saddled your horse, and de General is ready for to start." This intelligence brought me in an instant to my feet. Inserting my legs into my huge cavalry-boots, I soon emerged from the tent, and in a few minutes I galloped off with the General and the other members of the Staff in full haste for the front.

For the reader's better comprehension of the events I am about to narrate, it will be necessary to describe the position of the two hostile armies, and the ground on which one of the most sanguinary battles of the present century was to be fought. The little valley in which Fredericksburg is situated is enclosed on the south side of the Rappahannock by a range of hills, which, directly opposite the town, are known as "Marye's Heights," and approach within half a mile of the river, and which, receding from it afterwards in a semicircular or crescent-like sweep of five miles to a distance of three miles from the stream, again trend towards it near Hamilton's Crossing, at which point the interval between them may be one mile and a half. Most of these hills are covered with a thick copse of oak, and only in front of the town are they quite bare of trees. The ground towards the Rappahannock is open and flat, and is intersected only by some small streams—such as the Hazel and Deep Run—and broken immediately upon the river by several large and deep ravines, which afforded serviceable shelter to the Federal troops in their retreat under the fire of our artillery. This valley is cut nearly in half by the railway from Hamilton's Crossing to Fredericksburg, the high embankment of which was used by a portion of Jackson's troops as a breastwork. Nearly parallel with the railway runs the

county turnpike road, which, at a distance of four miles from Fredericksburg, branches off, leading on the right to Hamilton's Crossing, where it crosses the railway, giving the name to the station, and on the left to Port Royal, where it strikes the Rappahannock. The turnpike road from Fredericksburg to the fork just mentioned, being carried for a considerable distance through deep cuts, formed a formidable defensive work for the Federals.

On this semicircle of hills, the relative position of which to the river, the railway, the turnpike, and the town I have endeavoured to render intelligible, our army, numbering in all about 80,000 men, was posted in order of battle behind a continuous line of intrenchments, concealed from the enemy's view by the thick underwood, which, except in a few small spaces, covers the ridge abundantly. Longstreet's corps formed the left, Jackson's the right, of our lines. Our extreme left, constituting Anderson's division, rested on a broad swampy ditch, which about two miles above Fredericksburg makes up from the Rappahannock; then came Ransom's and M'Laws's divisions, the right wing of the latter extending across the Telegraph Road, there joining Pickett's troops; and farther on Hood's division, which occupied as nearly as possible the centre of our whole line of battle, at a point where the hills open into a small valley for the passage of

the creek, Deep Run; yet further on came Early's division of Jackson's corps. The extreme right was composed of A. P. Hill's division, holding in reserve the troops of Taliaferro. The splendid division of D. H. Hill, having been kept back by some demonstrations of the enemy in the direction of Port Royal, did not join us until the evening of the battle, the 13th, when it took its place on the extreme right. The cavalry, with the exception of Hampton's brigade, which was operating on the upper Rappahannock, and our horse-artillery, under Pelham, occupied the road leading from Hamilton's Crossing to Port Royal, our right extending to Massaponax Creek, and our line of battle thus stood nearly perpendicular to the lines of the main army. The bulk of the artillery, numbering about 250 pieces, was well posted all along the lines, but was principally concentrated into large batteries, on the extreme right, under Colonel Lindsay Walker, in the centre under Colonel Alexander, and on the left opposite Fredericksburg, on Marye's Heights, under Colonel Walton. The Rappahannock is closely lined on its northern bank by a range of commanding hills, on which the hostile artillery, consisting of more than 300 pieces, some of them of heavier calibre than had ever before been employed in the field, were advantageously posted. The greater part of them, especially those on the Stafford Heights,

bore immediately on the town, but nearly all were in a position to sweep the plains on our side of the river. The entire strength of the Federal army in the battle amounted to not less than 150,000 men.

Reaching our lines, we found General Lee on an eminence which, rising considerably above the other heights, a few hundred yards to the right of the Telegraph Road, afforded a view over nearly the whole plain before him, and gave our great commander the opportunity of watching closely the operations of the enemy, and controlling the movements of his own army in accordance therewith. This hill having been occupied by General Lee during the entire progress of the battle, received his name, and to all future generations of Southerners it will be known as the spot from which their gallant forefathers were led on to victory. Longstreet and several other generals were also assembled here, looking anxiously towards Fredericksburg, as yet concealed from their sight by a dense fog which hung heavily over the little valley. Information had been received here that under cover of the fog the enemy had endeavoured to lay his pontoon bridges across the river, but that, by the accurate and effective fire of Barksdale's Mississippi brigade, the Federal engineers and working parties had been driven off with heavy loss, and all their efforts had been so far unsuccessful. The cannonade

which had so rudely roused us from our slumbers had been nothing more than an artillery duel between some of the Federal batteries and a like number of our own, and had now ceased altogether; and the quiet of the morning was disturbed only by the repeated cracks of Barksdale's rifles sounding over from the river, from which we knew that the enemy's bridge-building was still resisted with spirit. The frequent reports which reached us from that quarter were as favourable as could be desired—"All right! the enemy have been driven back, with severe loss, from their pontoons."

So several hours passed wearily away, oppressing every one of us with an anticipation of the sad spectacle we should soon be compelled to witness in the bombardment of the town. Already the Telegraph Road leading up to the heights from Fredericksburg was thronged with a confused mass of fugitives, men, women, and children, who had not been willing or able to leave their homesteads before, bearing with them such of their effects as they could bring away, and as they most wished to save, many of which, having been dropped in the haste and terror of their exodus, marked the line of their flight as far as the eye could reach. Ten o'clock came, and the hammers of the church-clocks were just sounding the last peaceful stroke of the hour, when suddenly, at the

signal of a single cannon-shot, more than 150 pieces of artillery, including some of the enemy's most ponderous guns, opened their iron mouths with a terrific roar, and hurled a tempest of destruction upon the devoted town. The air shook, and the very earth beneath our feet trembled at this deafening cannonade, the heaviest that had ever yet assailed my ears. The thick fog still prevented us from obtaining a satisfactory view of the bombardment; but the howling of the solid shot, the bursting of the shells, the crashing of the missiles through the thick walls, and the dull sound of falling houses, united in a dismal concert of doom. Very soon the exact site of the unhappy town was indicated, even through the fog, by a rising column of smoke and dust, and the flames of burning buildings broke out of the dark overhanging canopy with reddening glare, while the bursting bombs flashed athwart the gloom like the arrowy lightning in a thunder-cloud. Our batteries did not respond to the guns of the enemy with a single shot. It was evident enough that nothing could be done to save the place from the desolation to which it had been fore-doomed by the wanton barbarity of the Federal commander. The horrible din lasted for two hours, and was succeeded by perfect silence—the silence of a solitude. About noon, a gentle breeze, springing up just as the roar of the latest guns died away, lifted the veil which

had mysteriously shrouded the valley, and the sun, breaking through the clouds, seemed to mock with its garish splendour the smoking ruins it revealed. Sad indeed was the scene that presented itself to our gaze, and to the eyes, filled with tears, of the mournful fugitives whose once happy homes lay before them, shattered or smouldering; and every heart of the thousands of brave Confederate soldiers who witnessed it burned for revenge.

It may be supposed that we thought with great anxiety of our Mississippi brigade, which had all the time been exposed to this *feu d'enfer;* but the sharp crack of their rifles soon gave us the gratifying assurance that these gallant fellows, unmindful of the death and anguish which shot and shell had been spreading amid their ranks, had firmly maintained their ground, and were ready to meet the enemy's attack; and a little later we received the satisfactory report that a renewed attempt of the Federals to force the building of their bridges had been defeated. But General Lee knew very well that he would not be able to prevent the passage of the river by the Federal army; and having entertained from the beginning no idea of seriously contesting this, he now gave orders for Barksdale's brigade to withdraw gradually from the town, and to keep up only a feigned resistance. Accordingly, about 2 P.M., Fredericksburg was alto-

gether abandoned by our men, after a sanguinary fight had been maintained for a considerable time in the streets. During the rest of the afternoon and evening, the pontoon bridges having been completed, the dense masses of the Federal army commenced to move over to our side of the river.

In the quietude that followed the hurly-burly of the day we exchanged felicitations upon the great blunder of the Federal commander in thus running right into the lion's mouth, and preparing to attack us in a position of our own choice, where his defeat was wellnigh certain—a lack of generalship on his part which we had scarcely dared to hope for. Even the face of our great commander Lee, which rarely underwent any change of expression at the news of victory or disaster, seemed to be lit up with pleasure at every fresh report that a greater number of the enemy had crossed the river. With the gathering darkness Stuart returned to our cavalry headquarters, attended by the members of his Staff, for a short interim of rest, each one of us looking forward with good confidence and certain hope, in common with our whole army, to the great battle which, in all human probability, would be joined at an early hour of the following day.

12*th December*.—At an early hour of the morning we were again assembled on "Lee's Hill," viewing

the plain beneath us, from which the fogs of the night were just rising, and where the rays of the newly-risen sun revealed many thousands of Yankees who had crossed from the Stafford side of the river since the previous afternoon. The enemy seemed as busy as bees. Long trains of artillery and ammunition and provision waggons were to be seen descending the heights on the opposite side, and interminable columns of infantry, blue in colour, and blurred by distance, flowed towards us like the waves of a steadily-advancing sea. On and on they came, with flash of bayonets and flutter of flags, to the measure of military music, each note of which was borne to us by the morning breeze, and we could distinctly observe them deploy into line of battle. From the many heavy batteries over the river rose, from time to time, little white puffs of smoke, and the deep, dull boom of the big guns was almost immediately followed by the angry whirr of a 50 or 100-pound shell, which falling, in the majority of instances, too short, did little or no damage. Our artillery, from different points along our line, occasionally answered the enemy's guns with just as little effect; and our confident belief that the great battle would be fought on the morning of the 12th was more and more weakened as the day wore on.

About eleven o'clock I was asked by General Stuart to accompany him on a ride along our line of

battle to the extreme right, that we might look after our horsemen, reconnoitre the position and movements of the enemy in that direction, and ascertain whether the nature of the ground was such that a charge of our whole cavalry division during the impending fight might be profitably attempted. It was a pleasure and an encouragement to pass the extended lines of our soldiers, who were lying carelessly behind their earthworks, or actively engaged in throwing up new ones—some cooking, others gaily discussing the designs of the enemy, and greeting with loud cheers of derision the enormous shells, which they called "Yankee flour-barrels," as these came tumbling into the woods around them, and to read in every bronzed face of them all eagerness for the conflict, and confidence as to the result. The atmosphere had now again become obscure, and the fog was rolling up from the low swampy grounds along the margin of Deep Run Creek, in the immediate front of Hood's and Early's divisions. Here we turned off into a narrow bridle-path, which bore away some distance from our lines, but would shorten our ride by nearly a mile. We had proceeded but a few steps in a careless trot, when suddenly a long line of horsemen in skirmishing order appeared directly before us in the mist. I felt very certain they were Federal horsemen, but Stuart was unwill-

ing to believe that the Yankees would have the audacity to approach our position so closely; and as the greater part of them wore a brownish dust-coloured jacket over their uniforms, he set them down as a small command of our own cavalry returning from a reconnaissance. So we continued upon our route yet a little farther, until, at a distance of about forty yards, several carbine-shots, whose bullets whistled around our heads, taught us very plainly with whom we had to deal. At the same moment ten or fifteen of the dragoons spurred furiously towards us, demanding, with loud outcries, our surrender; hearing which, we galloped in some haste back to our lines, where our bold pursuers were received and put to flight by Early's sharp-shooters. A considerable number of our infantry skirmishers now moved forward to drive the dashing cavalrymen off; but the latter held their ground gallantly, and kept up so annoying a fire with their long-range carbines, that our men did not obtain any advantage over them, while Stuart and myself could not look without admiration upon the address and intrepidity our enemies displayed. General Hood, who had been attracted by the noise of the brisk fusillade, soon came riding up to us, and seeing at a moment what was going on, said, "This will never do; I must send up some of my Texans, who will

make short work of these impudent Yankees." One of Hood's adjutants galloped off at once with an order from his general, and soon a select number of these dreaded marksmen, crawling along the ground, after their wild Indian fashion, advanced upon the Federal dragoons, who had no idea of their approach until they opened fire at a distance of about eighty yards. In a few seconds several men and horses had been killed, and the whole Federal line, stampeded by a galling fire from an unseen foe in a quarter wholly unexpected, broke into confused and rapid flight.

This opened the way for us, and we continued our ride without farther interruption. On the left wing of A. P. Hill's division, we had to pass a small piece of wood, extending in a triangular shape about six or eight hundred yards outside of our lines, with a base of about half a mile, offering, in my opinion, a great advantage to the enemy, and I remarked to Stuart that I thought it ought to be cut down. He did not regard this as necessary, as he did not believe that, under the sweeping cross-fire of our artillery, the Federals could ever advance so far. The events of the following day proved, however, that I had been right, as, under cover of this identical piece of wood, a hostile division approached so rapidly and unexpectedly that here alone our line was broken, and we suffered severe loss before the enemy could be driven

back. We found our horsemen in good spirits, and occupying their position on the Port Royal road, where the right wing was engaged in a lively skirmish with a body of Federal cavalry, which ended in the withdrawal of the latter. Our comrades of the other arms of the service had indulged in some captious criticism of the cavalry for not having given the decisive finishing stroke to great battles by grand and overwhelming charges, as had been done in the times of Frederick the Great and Napoleon—criticism that was unwarranted and unjust, since the nature of the ground in Virginia did not favour the operations of cavalry, and since the great improvement in firearms in our day had necessitated a very material change in cavalry tactics. Still more unkind and uncalled-for did such animadversions appear when it was considered what important services had been rendered by the cavalry—the hard fighting they had done, the wearisome marches they had made, the fatigue and cold and hunger they had cheerfully endured. Nevertheless General Stuart was anxious, with every officer and private under his command, to show that we were able to do what other cavalry had accomplished before us; and all burned with the noble ambition of winning an enduring fame on so grand a theatre, with the eyes of the whole army resting upon us. The forty centuries that looked

down from the Pyramids on the legions of the mighty Corsican did not inspire them with a more generous ardour. The open plain before us, cut by only a few ditches, and with only here and there a fence running across it, seemed to offer us the arena for the realisation of our dreams of glory; but upon a closer survey of the ground we found it much too soft for a charge with any chance of success, as the horses, moving even at a moderate speed, would sink several feet into the mire. A sluggish artillery fire which had lasted all day, grew, about one o'clock, into a spirited cannonade all along the lines, in which the Federal light batteries on our side of the river took no part, it being altogether maintained by their heavier guns on the Stafford Hills. This continued until two o'clock, when the firing slackened again to the occasional boom of the largest pieces of ordnance.

On the road between Hamilton's Crossing and Fredericksburg, thousands of Yankees were working like beavers in digging rifle-pits, and erecting works for their artillery. Stuart being anxious to discover exactly what they were about, I rode with him in that direction to a small barn, where we dismounted and tied our horses, and thence carefully approached the hostile lines by creeping along a ditch which led into the main turnpike road, constituting the boun-

dary of an inconsiderable plantation. Thus we proceeded until we reached a slight eminence only a few hundred yards from the Yankees, where two big posts, the remains of a dismantled gate, concealed us from their observation. Our own view was so satisfactory, that with our field-glasses we could distinctly mark the features of the men. It was evident enough to us that they were engaged in converting the simple road into a most formidable work of defence, and that in Jackson's front they were massing large forces of infantry and artillery, of the latter of which I counted thirty-two guns in one battery. Quite content with what we had seen, we returned to our horses, and I received orders to ride at once to General Lee to make report of our reconnaissance, General Stuart himself galloping over to A. P. Hill. After a ride of a few minutes, I met Generals Lee and Jackson, who were taking a turn to inspect our own lines, and to reconnoitre those of the enemy. Upon hearing what I had to tell them, both generals determined at once to repair themselves to the point of look-out from which we had just withdrawn, and, leaving their numerous escort behind, accompanied only by an orderly, they rode forward under my guidance to the barn already mentioned. Here the horses were placed in charge of the orderly, and we made our way on foot to the

gate-posts. Fearing to augment the danger of their situation by my presence, I retired to the roadside some twenty yards distant, and left the two great leaders to their conference and survey. I must confess I felt extremely nervous as regards their safety, so close to the enemy, who surely little suspected that the two greatest heroes of the war were so nearly in their clutches. One well-directed shot, or a rapid dash of resolute horsemen, might have destroyed the hopes and confidence of our whole army. The sensation of relief on my part was therefore great, when, after many minutes of painful anxiety and impatience, the generals slowly returned, and we reached our horses without accident.

We were now soon joined by Stuart, and all, except Jackson, who parted with us to regain the troops under his command, rode back to Lee's Hill, from which a desultory cannonade was still kept up. Here we found that one of our 32-pounder Parrott guns had burst only a few moments before—a disaster which was fortunately not attended with loss of life, but which came very near proving fatal to our English friend Captain Phillips, who was standing at the instant of the explosion quite close to the gun, huge fragments of which had been scattered with fearful violence all around him. The witnesses of the scene were full of admiration at the coolness displayed by

our visitor on this occasion, and none of us could fail to remark the soldierly indifference to danger he manifested under heavy fire throughout the day. These Parrott guns had been manufactured in Richmond, and the iron of which they were cast was so defective that a second gun burst the same evening, wounding several of the gunners severely. At dusk the firing ceased altogether, and we returned to our headquarters, where our little military family, officers and guests, gathered around the glowing fires of Stuart's double-chimneyed tent to recite the adventures of the past, and discuss the chances of the coming day.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE GREAT BATTLE OF FREDERICKSBURG.

13*th December* 1862. — The darkness of night was just giving way before the doubtful light of morning, which struggled with a dense, all-obscuring fog, when the bugle sounded to horse at our headquarters. In obeying the summons, every man girded his sword more tightly around his waist, and looked with greater care than usual to the saddling of his horse and the loading of his revolver, feeling well assured that the hour of the momentous conflict had indeed arrived. Our guest, Captain Phillips, believing that he should obtain a more extended and satisfactory view of the engagement from Lee's Hill than from the position of our cavalry on the right flank, made up his mind to separate himself from us for the day, and at an early hour we parted with this portly grenadier, whose engaging manners had endeared him to us all. Our parting had just that little admixture of

sadness in it which came from the involuntary misgiving that possibly we were bidding each other a final farewell. Captain Phillips had worn in camp a narrow red and blue striped necktie, consisting of a bit of the ribbon of his regiment, the Grenadier Guards, which, at the moment of leaving us, he handed to Pelham, with the request that he would wear it as a talisman during the battle, and return it afterwards to the owner to be preserved as a relique. The boy-hero, with the blush of modesty and pride suffusing his fair cheek, readily accepted the compliment, and, tying the ribbon around his cap, galloped off with us to the front, where we hastened to take our position on the extreme right. On our way we met General Maxey Gregg, a gallant officer from South Carolina, with whom I exchanged a few words of friendly greeting for the last time, as a few hours afterwards he was a corpse.

Jackson had chosen his own position on an eminence, within a few hundred yards of Hamilton's Crossing, which rose above the general elevation of the ridge in a similar manner to Lee's Hill on the left, and which has ever since borne the name of "Jackson's Hill," from its having been rendered historical by the presence of the great warrior during the fight. Here we first directed our horses, and here we found Stonewall and A. P. Hill, with their respective

Staffs, looking out through the white mists of the morning into the plain below, from which arose an indistinct murmur, like the distant hum of myriads of bees, vaguely announcing to us its hostile occupation by thousands of human beings. Jackson and Stuart concurred in the opinion that it would be the best plan to make a sudden general attack upon the enemy under cover of the fog, which must have prevented the fire of the numerous Federal batteries on the other side of the Rappahannock, or caused that fire to be ineffective; but General Lee had decided in council of war against any offensive movement, preferring to fight behind his intrenchments and to inflict a severe blow upon the enemy without the risk of fearful loss of life, even should the material result prove a less decided one. After remaining for half an hour upon Jackson's Hill, we rode down to the lines of our cavalry, and found our sharpshooters all along the Port Royal road, well posted in rifle-pits or behind the high embankments of the turnpike, the regiments themselves a little farther back in reserve, and Pelham's eighteen pieces of horse-artillery in favourable position, the young leader longing for the combat, and anxious to open the ball with some of his light guns.

Nine o'clock came, and still the vaporous curtain overhung the plateau, still the brooding silence pre-

vailed, which always seemed the deeper just before the furies of war were to be unchained; and we slowly returned to the Crossing, almost despairing that the decisive action would be fought on that day. Here we dismounted to rest our horses, and I found a convenient seat on a large box, one of many filled with boots and uniforms for our soldiers, which had been deposited near the station for distribution among the respective commands of our army. I had been seated but a few minutes, when suddenly it seemed as though a tremendous hurricane had burst upon us, and we became sensible upon the instant of a howling tempest of shot and shell hurled against our position from not fewer than 300 pieces of artillery, which had opened all along the hostile lines, with a roar more deafening than the loudest thunder. Hundreds of missiles of every size and description crashed through the woods, breaking down trees and scattering branches and splinters in all directions. I was just calling out to the orderly who held my horse, and had been walking the animal up and down at the distance of a hundred yards, to return to me at once, when, about thirty paces from me, a young officer of artillery, struck by the fragment of a shell, fell with a groan to the earth; I immediately rushed to his assistance, but reached him only to receive his parting breath as I lifted him from the

spot. This incident, sad as it was, saved my own life, for, a few seconds after I had left my seat, a huge shell, falling into a pile of boxes and bursting there, shattered them to atoms, filling the air with the debris of wood, leather, and clothing.

As this cannonade was in all probability to be immediately followed up by a general attack, we galloped to our post with the cavalry, which as yet had suffered not at all from the heavy fire of the enemy, this being concentrated chiefly upon our main line. And now the thick veil of mist that had concealed the plain from our eyes rolled away, like the drawing up of a drop-scene at the opera, and revealed to us the countless corps, divisions, brigades, and regiments of the Federal army forming their lines of attack. At this moment I was sent by Stuart to General Jackson with the message that the Yankees were about commencing their advance. I found old Stonewall standing at ease upon his hill, unmoved in the midst of the terrible fire, narrowly observing the movements of the enemy through his field-glass. The atmosphere was now perfectly clear, and from this eminence was afforded a distinct view of more than two-thirds of the battle-field, and the larger part of the whole number of the advancing foe, extending as far as the eye could reach—a military panorama, the grandeur of which I had never

seen equalled. On they came, in beautiful order, as if on parade, a moving forest of steel, their bayonets glistening in the bright sunlight; on they came, waving their hundreds of regimental flags, which relieved with warm bits of colouring the dull blue of the columns and the russet tinge of the wintery landscape, while their artillery beyond the river continued the cannonade with unabated fury over their heads, and gave a background of white fleecy smoke, like midsummer clouds, to the animated picture.

I could not rid myself of a feeling of depression and anxiety as I saw this innumerable host steadily moving upon our lines, which were hidden by the woods, where our artillery maintained as yet a perfect silence, General Lee having given orders that our guns should not open fire until the Yankees had come within easy canister range. Upon my mentioning this feeling to Jackson, the old chief answered me in his characteristic way: "Major, my men have sometimes failed *to take* a position, but *to defend* one, never! I am glad the Yankees are coming." He then gave me orders for Stuart to employ his horse-artillery, and open fire at once on the enemy's flank.

Pelham was accordingly directed to prepare for action, but, being exceedingly anxious to go to work without a moment's delay, he begged Stuart to allow

him to advance two of his light pieces to the fork of the road where the turnpike branches off to Fredericksburg, as from this point the masses of the enemy offered him an easy target. The permission being giving, Pelham went off with his two guns at a gallop, amidst the loud cheering of the cannoneers, and in a few minutes his solid shot were ploughing at short range with fearful effect through the dense columns of the Federals. The boldness of the enterprise and the fatal accuracy of the firing seemed to paralyse for a time and then to stampede the whole of the extreme left of the Yankee army, and terror and confusion reigned there during some minutes: soon, however, several batteries moved into position, and, uniting with several of those on the Stafford Heights, concentrated a tremendous fire upon our guns, one of which, a Blakely gun, was quickly disabled and compelled to withdraw. I was now sent by General Stuart to tell Pelham to retire if he thought the proper moment had arrived, but the young hero could not be moved. "Tell the General I can hold my ground," he said, and again and again pealed out the ringing report of his single gun, upon which at one time 32 pieces of the enemy's artillery were brought to bear in a sweeping cross-fire, which killed and wounded many of the men, so that at last Pelham had to assist himself in loading and aiming

it. Three times the summons to retire was renewed; but not until the last round of ammunition had been discharged, and after spreading carnage for two hours in the ranks of the Federal infantry, did the gallant officer succumb to necessity in abandoning his position.*

The rest of our horse-artillery had in the mean time joined in the cannonade, and the thunder soon rolled all along our lines, while from the continuous roar the ear caught distinctly the sharp, rapid, rattling volleys of the musketry, especially in the immediate front of General A. P. Hill, where the infantry were very hotly engaged. The battle was now fully developed, and the mists of the morning were presently succeeded by a dense cloud of powder-smoke, out of which rose ever and anon the dark column from an exploding caisson. At intervals above the tumult of the conflict we could hear the wild hurrah of the attacking hosts of the Federals, and the defiant yell of the Confederates, as the as-

* For the gallantry displayed here, and his great services rendered during the latter part of the battle, Pelham was highly complimented in Stuart's, Jackson's, and Lee's reports, the latter of which styled him "the gallant Pelham"—a title which was adopted in a short time by the whole army, and which has often been employed in these memoirs. Several English writers have done justice to his heroism on this special occasion.—See Chesney's 'Campaigns in Virginia,' vol i. p. 192; Fletcher's 'History of the American War,' vol. ii. p. 250.

sault was repulsed. Directly in our own front the cavalry sharpshooters had become occupied with long lines of hostile tirailleurs, and a vivid fusillade raged all along the Port Royal road, the shot and shell of our horse-artillery, which was in position in our rear, crossing in their flight the missiles of the enemy's batteries high in air above the heads of our men. The firing grew most animated near a number of stacks of straw, which a body of Federal infantry had taken possession of, and which offered them so efficient a shelter that all attempts to dislodge them had proved in vain. I had just been ordering our men not to waste their ammunition, and to fire only when they saw the person of a Yankee completely exposed, when close at hand I heard the dull thud of a bullet striking home, and turning round saw one of our soldiers, a gallant young fellow whom I knew well, throw up his arms and fall heavily to the ground. Dismounting at once I hastened to his side, but finding that the ball had struck him right in the middle of the forehead, I regarded him as a corpse, and deemed all further assistance wholly unnecessary. Not many minutes had elapsed, however, before the apparently dead man began to move, and when the surgeon, who had already arrived, poured some brandy down his throat, to our infinite amazement he opened his eyes. A few hours later,

miraculous to relate, when the bleeding from the wound had ceased, he had recovered sufficiently from the severe shock to return to his post of duty. According to the surgeon's statement, the ball, striking obliquely, had glanced, passing between cuticle and skull all around the head, emerging at last from the very place it had first entered!

The fury and tumult of the battle lasted all the forenoon and until two o'clock in the afternoon along Jackson's lines. A comparative quietude then succeeded, the infantry firing died away, and only a regular intermittent cannonade was kept up in our immediate front; but from the left opposite Fredericksburg there came to us the heavy boom of artillery and the distant rattle of small-arms, and we knew the fight still raged there with undiminished vehemence. So far all had gone favourably for us. The division of A. P. Hill had sustained the first shock of the Federal attack, which for a while had promised success to the enemy. On the left wing of this division, under cover of the fog and protected by the triangular piece of wood already described, the hostile column had fallen rather suddenly upon our men, the first line of whom, consisting of a brigade of North Carolina conscripts, gave way, reaching the second line in their retreat at the same moment nearly with their pursuers, with whom they

became indiscriminately mingled, whereby was caused inevitable confusion and great loss of life on our side. Here the gallant General Gregg fell mortally wounded while attempting to rally his men. Our reserves speedily coming up, however, with the right wing of Early's division, the Yankees were repulsed with severe loss, and pursued far into the plain. The whole of Early's and Hood's divisions now soon became engaged, and after a short but sanguinary contest succeeded in driving back the enemy in like manner with fearful slaughter. Again and again, with the most obstinate courage and energy, did the Federals renew the attack, bringing more and more fresh troops into action; but their dense lines were so much shattered by the appalling fire of our artillery that, upon coming within range of our infantry and being there received with a withering hail of bullets, they broke and fled time after time, leaving the ground strewn with hundreds of their dead and wounded. Our men could with difficulty be held back in their intrenchments, and more than once followed the flying host far out upon the plateau, until the sweeping fire of the Yankee batteries put an end to their pursuit. Immediately in front of Jackson's Hill the fight had for a considerable period been fiercest, and our antagonists, repeating the onset with the greatest bravery, had on several

occasions come up to the very muzzles of our guns. Here, opposite his great namesake, fell the Federal General Jackson. The troops under his command broke into disorderly flight after his death, and one of his regiments, from the State of Pennsylvania, was captured to the last man in the railway cut in front of our position, where they sought shelter from the tremendous fire of artillery and musketry that poured down upon them.

While the Yankees were thus suffering reverses in this portion of the field, large masses of their troops had been concentrated near Fredericksburg, opposite Marye's Heights, where that stern and steady fighter Longstreet awaited their attack with his accustomed composure, and where our great leader Lee himself inspired the troops by his presence. This portion of our lines was unquestionably the strongest, and the folly of the Federal commander in sending his men here to certain death and destruction is utterly incomprehensible. All along Marye's Heights runs a sunken road, fenced in with a stone wall on either side, which in itself constituted a most formidable defensive work for our troops; a little higher up the hill there was a regular line of intrenchments, the defenders of which might fire over the heads of those below them, and the crest was occupied by the numerous pieces of the famous Washington Artillery,

under their gallant commander Colonel Walton; so that the assailants were received with a triple sheet of fire, which swept them away by hundreds. The Federals certainly behaved with the utmost gallantry. Line after line moved forward to the assault, only to recoil again and again from the murderous tempest of shot, shell, and bullets, and to strew yet more thickly with dead and wounded the crimsoned field, which was afterwards most appropriately named "the slaughter-pen." Pickett's division was but little engaged here, the wider open space of ground giving ample opportunity to our artillery to play upon the hostile columns, scattering them and throwing them into disorder even before they could form their lines of attack.

About three o'clock in the afternoon there seemed to be a new movement preparing on the enemy's left, and General Stuart, suspecting it might be a movement on our right flank, ordered me to proceed with twenty couriers to our extreme right, reconnoitre the operations of the Yankees as closely as possible, and send him a report every five minutes. Captain Blackford, who possessed a very good field-glass, volunteered to accompany me, and we at once trotted off together upon our hazardous expedition. Near to the point where the Massaponax Creek falls into the Rappahannock, and at about one hundred yards'

distance from the larger stream, there rises a small elevation of ground thickly covered with cedar and pine trees, from which we were well assured there might be obtained a good view over the river, and the whole left wing of the Federal army. This hillock was quite outside of our lines, and there had been pushed forward towards it only a small body of our sharpshooters, whom we found lying concealed in the bushes below, for the Yankees, perfectly aware of the importance of this point of observation, had cleared the summit of its occupants by a severe fire whenever a grey uniform had been seen there. Leaving the couriers at the foot of the hill, Blackford and I dismounted and climbed cautiously up to the top, creeping along through the bushes and concealing ourselves behind some pine-trees that grew on the way. The view which here presented itself to our eyes far exceeded our expectations. The Yankees, not more than a thousand yards distant from us, were evidently enough preparing for a new advance; reinforcements were moving up at a double-quick and forming into line of battle as they arrived; troops that had been engaged in the battle and been repulsed were marching sulkily to the rear; wounded men were being carried off by hundreds, while there galloped up and down the lines general officers with their Staffs, some of whom we could personally recog-

nise through our glasses. To the right we looked down upon the river for a considerable distance, and could plainly see and count the heavy guns on the opposite bank, and could even hear the conversation of the cannoneers. Cautious as we had been, however, the Yankees quickly discovered our presence, and a number of their sharpshooters, sent forward to dislodge us, commenced a sharp fire of exploding bullets, which, striking the objects around us, burst, with the noise peculiar to these projectiles, and scattered their fragments in every direction like small-shot. Well protected by the pine-trees we paid little attention to this fusillade, when suddenly I observed two pieces of artillery moving into position, and before Blackford finished uttering the words, "Von, the Yankees are going to shell us out of this," a missile, whizzing towards us, struck the topmost branches of one of the pines, and, exploding there, rained down upon us a shower of limbs and splinters. Others followed in rapid succession with increasing accuracy of aim, so that we concluded to evacuate the spot and seek shelter for a time on the opposite side of the hill. Breaking at once through the bushes, we thought it would be an easy matter enough to get to a place of security, but the enemy's gunners followed our movements with a nicety of calculation so admirable that shot after shot came yet nearer

and nearer to us, and at the very moment that we supposed we had got out of their reach, a shell passed so near to our heads that my gallant friend and myself were precipitated headlong by the force of windage at least fifteen feet down the hillside, where we both lay motionless for a brief space, and then rose in a fit of uncontrollable laughter as we looked each in the other's blank and astonished face. Returning, as soon as the firing had ceased, to the spot we had so suddenly abandoned, we saw the Federal lines moving forward to their new attack, which was introduced and supported by a cannonade of several hundred pieces equal in fury to that of the morning. The balls fired from the opposite side of the river howled and hissed in their course over our heads, each shot of the heavy guns reverberating from the cliffs like rolling thunder, while the musketry soon became audible again, giving proof by its increasing vehemence that the hostile parties were now hotly engaged. An hour of anxiety and doubt passed away, until at five o'clock we saw scattered fugitives straggling to the rear, their numbers augmenting every moment, until whole regiments, brigades, and divisions, in utter confusion and bewildered flight, covered the plain before us. Blackford, as excited as myself, jumped from his hiding-place, and, throwing his hat in the air, cried out, "Thank God, they

are whipped—they are running!" Yes; there was no doubt about it—they were running; and all the efforts of their officers, whom we could distinctly see using their sabres against their own men to check the precipitate retreat, were unavailing. All discipline was lost for the moment, and those thousands of troops whom an hour before we had seen advancing in beautiful military order, now presented the spectacle of a stampeded and demoralised mob. Having kept Stuart constantly informed of the enemy's movements, I was at this moment more careful to send courier after courier to apprise him that the Yankees were routed, and that in my judgment the time for our attack had arrived; but my general did not fully credit my report, until at my urgent request he galloped up to us in person to see, just a little too late, how correct my account of affairs had been. Off we now hastened to Jackson, who at once sent to General Lee the request that he might leave his intrenchments without further delay, fall upon the enemy, and render the victory complete. A single cannon-shot fired from our centre was to be the signal for the general attack by our whole line, at which movement Stuart was to press forward with his cavalry and horse-artillery vigorously upon the enemy's flank.

Returning to our position on the Port Royal road, we awaited in anxious silence the so much desired

signal; but minute after minute passed by, and the dark veil of night began to envelop the valley, when Stuart, believing that the summons agreed upon had been given, issued the order to advance. Off we went into the gathering darkness, our sharpshooters driving their opponents easily before them, and Pelham, with his guns, pushing ahead at a trot, firing a few shots whenever the position seemed favourable, and then again pressing forward. This lasted about twenty minutes, when the fire of the enemy's infantry began to be more and more destructive, and other fresh batteries opened upon us.* Still all remained silent upon our main line. Stuart himself, as usual, was always in the extreme front, exposing his person to the hottest fire; one bullet had already pierced his haversack, and another torn the fur collar off his cape, and the wonder was that any one of us had escaped unhurt.

Our situation had become, indeed, a critical one, when a courier from General Jackson galloped up at full speed bringing the order for Stuart to retreat as quickly as he could to his original position. Our

* It must be remarked here that the division of Federal infantry opposite to us had not as yet gone into the battle, and therefore had not been included in the rout, and that the Yankees had gained time enough to replace their demoralised troops with reserves drawn as rapidly as possible from the other side of the river.

commander-in-chief, adhering to his earliest idea, still objected to a forward movement, for which, in my judgment, the golden moment had now passed, had he inclined to favour it. Under cover of the darkness of the night, we conducted our retrograde movement in safety, and reached our old position on the Port Royal road with but slight loss.

The division of D. H. Hill had now arrived at Hamilton's Crossing, and had been placed at once in the open field upon Jackson's right, where might be seen the glare of their hundreds of camp-fires, and where they were busily engaged in throwing up intrenchments. On our left wing the assault of the enemy had been renewed at dark, and had been attended with the same fatal result to them with their efforts elsewhere, and the ground in front of Marye's Heights was heaped with dead bodies, chiefly those of the brave Irishmen of Meagher's brigade, which went to the attack 1200 strong, and left 900 of their number upon this dreadful spot. About seven o'clock the battle ceased for the day; only random cannon-shots were still interchanged, the flight of the shells distinctly marked in flaming curves across the dark firmament, and the shadows of evening fell upon a battle-field, the nameless horrors of which none of us had even measurably conjectured—a battle-field where thousands of mutilated and dying men lay in

hopeless anguish, writhing in their wounds, and pitilessly exposed to the sharp frosty air of the winter's night.

Not one of our generals was aware of the magnitude of the victory we had gained, of the injury we had inflicted upon the enemy, and of the degree of demoralisation in the hostile army, everybody regarding the work as but half done, and expecting a renewal of the attack the following morning. Of our own army only one-third had been engaged, and our loss did not exceed 1800 in killed and wounded. Most of these belonged to A. P. Hill's division, and had fallen during the first attack in the morning on the spot where our lines had for some time been broken. We had to mourn the loss of two general officers, Maxey Gregg of South Carolina, and Thomas R. R. Cobb of Georgia, who fell on Marye's Heights. At his side General Cooke, a brother of Mrs Stuart, was dangerously wounded in the forehead. The Federal loss was not less than 14,000 in killed and wounded (we took only 800 prisoners), and in this frightful aggregate of casualties was to be reckoned the loss of many officers of rank. Among these there was the much-lamented General Bayard, a cavalry officer of great promise, who, far in the rear of his lines, was torn to pieces by one of our exploding shells while in the act of taking luncheon under a tree.

General Lee has been much criticised, and chiefly by English writers, for not having assumed the offensive in this battle; but every one who knows how exceedingly difficult it had become, already at that time, to fill the ranks of the Confederate army, and how valuable each individual life in that army must have been considered, and, on the other hand, what reckless prodigality of life characterised the Federal Government and the Federal commanders, caring little that 20,000 or 30,000 men should be killed in a campaign, when as many more Germans and Irishmen could be readily put in their places,—I say that every one who bears in mind these facts will agree with me in thinking that our commander-in-chief acted with great consideration and wisdom. There was scarcely an officer in the whole army who did not confidently believe that the attack would be renewed the next day; and where an opportunity was likely to be afforded of again inflicting serious damage upon the enemy with trifling injury to ourselves, it surely cannot be censured as a fault to have speculated upon the incapacity of the adversary. General Lee, who had been careful to strengthen the weaker portions of his line during the night, said in my presence on the following morning, "My army is as much stronger for their new intrenchments as if I had received reinforcements of 20,000 men." I

regard it as almost certain that had the Federal commander been able to carry out his intention of renewing the struggle, the second day would have turned out even more disastrously to him than the first.

It was a late hour of the night when we returned to headquarters for a short rest. There we found Captain Phillips, who congratulated us heartily upon having safely passed through the perils of the day, and who spoke with enthusiasm of the magnificent view of the battle which he had obtained from Lee's Hill. With a modest smile, Pelham returned to the Captain the bit of regimental ribbon he had worn as a talisman during the fight, its gay colours just a little blackened by powder-smoke, for it had flaunted from the cap of the young hero in the very atmosphere of Death. Poor Pelham! he has been lying these three years in his early grave there in Alabama, whose Indian name, "Here we rest," has a pathetic significance as applied to the "narrow home" of one so young and so full of promise; and the record of his services to his country fills a few pages in the melancholy story of an unsuccessful struggle for national existence; but his memory is green in the hearts of friends that survived him, and a brave English soldier cherishes the ribbon he wore at Fredericksburg as one of the dearest souvenirs of the past in his possession.

We were greatly delighted at finding also at headquarters two of the younger members of the Staff, Lieutenants Hullyhan and Turner, who had just returned from a dangerous expedition into the enemy's lines on the other side of the Rappahannock. Several days before they had gone off with the hope of rescuing from the hands of the Yankees, Miss Mary Lee, the daughter of our commander-in-chief and a dear friend of General Stuart's, who, while on a visit to some friends in the county of Stafford, had been cut off from her home and family. This was an expedition after my own heart, but I was prevented from undertaking it by General Stuart's energetic opposition. The young lieutenants had reached in safety the house where Miss Lee was staying; but as her friends were afraid to allow her to accompany them on their return, they were compelled to come back without their expected precious charge—fortunately enough, indeed, for the lady, as they were very soon taken prisoners by a patrol of Federal cavalry. During the night following their capture they found the opportunity of overpowering and killing two of their sentinels with their own carbines; and mounting, just in the nick of time, the horses of the Yankee guard, they made good their escape before the rest of their captors had recovered from their amazement at the boldness of the venture.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE EVENTS OF THE 14TH, 15TH, AND 16TH DECEMBER.

DARKNESS still prevailed when we mounted our horses and again hastened to Jackson's Hill, the summit of which we reached just in time to see the sun rising, and unveiling, as it dispersed the hazy fogs of the damp, frosty winter's night, the long lines of the Federal army, which once more stood in full line of battle about half-way between our own position and the river. I could not withhold my admiration as I looked down upon the well-disciplined lines of our antagonist, astonished that these troops now offering so bold a front to our victorious army should be the same whom not many hours since I had seen in complete flight and disorder. The skirmishers of the two armies were not much more than a hundred yards apart, concealed from each other's view by the high grass in which they were lying, and above which, from time to time, rose a small cloud of blue smoke, telling that a shot had been fired, before the

report came feebly wafted to us by the light morning breeze.

As the boom of artillery now began to sound from different parts of the line, and the attack might be expected every minute, each hastened to his post. As on the previous day, our cavalry was briskly engaged with the hostile sharpshooters, and again the firing sounded loudest in the neighbourhood of the straw stacks already mentioned. That these should no longer offer a shelter, some of Pelham's well-directed shells soon set the dry material in a blaze, and the squad of forty or fifty Yankees who had sought the protection of the stacks, finding the place too hot to hold, scampered off in a body, accompanied by a loud cheer from our men, and a well-aimed volley, which brought down several of the fugitives. Hour after hour passed away in anxious expectation of the combat; but though the skirmishing at times grew hotter, and the fire of the artillery more rapid, long intervals of silence again succeeded. As usual, the hostile batteries were not chary of their ammunition; and whenever a group of officers showed itself plainly within range, it was at once greeted with a couple of shells or solid shot. Having to ride over to Fitz Lee, who, with the greater part of his brigade, was in reserve, I met Dr J., whose acquaintance I had made during one of our raids.

He was just driving up to the General in his buggy, which, besides its hospitable inmate, contained an excellent cold dinner and a bottle of whisky for our solace. We had scarcely, however, begun to unpack the chickens and biscuits, and the cork was still on its way through the neck of the whisky bottle, when, instead of the "cluck" announcing its complete extraction, our ears were greeted with a sound never pleasing at any time, but at this particular moment more than ever awakening disgust—the whizzing of a shell which plunged into the soft ground not more than twenty feet off, covering us instantaneously with an abundant coating of mud. This was too much for the nerves of our peaceful host, who drove off, carrying with him the much-coveted refreshments, which had delighted our eyes only to delude our remaining senses. We followed him, however, in eager pursuit, and succeeded several times in overtaking and arresting the flight of the precious fugitive, but each time our happiness was cut short by the enemy's artillery, whose aim pursued the buggy as tenaciously as ourselves, till at last we took refuge in a deep ravine, completely screened from the keen eyes of the Yankees, who, as we completed our meal, came in for a fire of maledictions for their want of common courtesy and consideration.

Thus did the day wear on to its close without any

event of importance; and it becoming evident as the evening advanced that the attack would not be renewed on the 14th, we returned after nightfall once more to our short night's rest at headquarters. Things looked very little changed when, on the cold, clear morning of the 15th, we rode up to Jackson's Hill; and General Stuart deciding to remain until serious fighting should commence, we had an opportunity of having a good look at the devastations caused by the tremendous artillery-fire of the 13th. The forest was literally torn to pieces—trees more than a foot in diameter were snapped in two, large branches were shattered to splinters, and scarcely a small twig but showed marks of some kind of missile. In many places the ground was ploughed up by the cannon-balls, which, together with pieces of shell, canister, and grape-shot, lay strewn in every direction. Most of our dead had already been buried, but the carcasses of the animals were still lying about in large numbers; the batteries of Walker's artillery on Jackson's Hill having lost not less than ninety horses during the first two hours of the terrific bombardment.

The morning passed slowly away, the anxious silence maintained being broken only by the firing from time to time of the heavy batteries; and many of our leaders, Stuart and Jackson foremost, began

to give up any hope of a renewal of the attack. The latter general was still in favour of a night attack, and proposed that our men should be stripped naked to the waist, so that they might easily recognise each other in the darkness and confusion of the conflict. About twelve o'clock two mounted officers, followed by a small squad of cavalry, bearing a white flag, suddenly appeared riding towards us from the enemy's lines, and soon after General Jackson received a report that a flag of truce had arrived, with a request on the part of the Federal generals to be allowed to bury their dead and look after the wounded. To this Stonewall did not think proper to accede, as the application was not signed by the Federal commander-in-chief, an omission which, on several previous occasions, had opened the way to serious misunderstandings. Accordingly the Federal officers retired to obtain the signature of Burnside, and did not return until after a delay of nearly two hours, when the permission which humanity dictated being applied for in due form, was readily granted.

Being one of the officers appointed on our side to superintend the proceedings, I rode forthwith down to the plain, and thus had the first opportunity of inspecting the battle-field in our immediate front. The burial parties of the Federals were ready and in

excellent order, and as soon as the truce was accepted, different columns, from 200 to 300 strong, moved forward in double-quick and went at once to work, taking up the wounded and burying the dead, assisted by a large number of our own men, who had long been anxious to bring help to the wounded sufferers outside our intrenchments, but were deterred from yielding to their humane impulses by the bullets of the enemy's sharpshooters. All had been going on thus smoothly for half an hour, when suddenly some of the batteries in the enemy's centre opened a heavy fire. The excitement and consternation caused by this was immense; the cry of treason ran along our lines; our men hurried back to their arms, while the Federal officers exerted themselves to maintain unbroken the peaceful relations which threatened for some little time to end in a sanguinary conflict. Fortunately, however, the firing soon afterwards ceased, and full explanations being given, proving the apparently treacherous act to have been a mistake, the work of humanity proceeded.

The carnage had raged most fiercely immediately opposite Jackson's Hill, and many hundred dead and wounded lay there intermingled. We had considerable difficulty in discovering the body of the Federal General Jackson, and it was at last found in

a small ravine. Beside him lay his adjutant, a very fine-looking young man, who, riding a grey horse during the action, had attracted the attention of our men, and frequently elicited their admiration by his conspicuous gallantry. His noble charger, only a few steps from him, was pierced by several bullets, and had probably fallen at the same moment with his brave rider. The poor wounded were in a miserable state after their long exposure to cold and hunger, and many were dying simply from starvation and neglect. We held long and interesting conversations with the Yankee officers, and were not a little surprised at the freedom and severity of the criticisms they passed on their commander-in-chief, and the candid acknowledgment of the heavy losses and severe defeat they had sustained. These gentlemen asserted that General Burnside was perfectly incapable of commanding a large army; that his splendid troops had been sacrificed and slaughtered uselessly, but that the General himself had taken good care not to endanger his own life, having observed and directed the battle from Phillips's House, a point of safety on the Stafford side of the river. There being but a comparatively small number of our dead, they were soon buried; but the Federals were occupied all day with their mournful task, and had not half finished when darkness put

an end to their operations. The approaching night brought with it a heavy storm and rain, and we were wet to the skin and shivering with cold when at a late hour we returned to headquarters. Stuart was in a very bad humour, and entertained no hope of a renewal of the fight the following day. "These Yankees," he said, "have always some underhand trick when they send a flag of truce, and I fear they will be off before daylight." This suspicion proved to be only too true. The next morning, when on our way to Hamilton's Crossing, we met a courier riding full gallop, who reported that the whole of the Federal army had disappeared from our side of the river.

The heavy rains and storm which raged all night favoured their enterprise. General Burnside had managed to remove his whole army over the three pontoon-bridges to the Stafford side; and his retreat was effected with such consummate skill, that our pickets had not the slightest knowledge of the movement until daybreak showed them that the whole of the large Yankee army, with all the artillery and waggon-trains, had disappeared from their front. On our arrival at the battle-field we found our men scattered over the plain, busy burying the dead, large numbers of which were still lying about. Reaching a place where about 300 corpses had been

collected to be lodged in one common grave, some of our men showed a number of small torpedoes, which they informed us had been set in large numbers by the enemy all over the field. Fortunately the charge of powder with which these infernal machines were prepared had been so damped by the heavy rain that they did not explode, and by this failure a large number of our men were saved from destruction. Soon afterwards we were much amused by lighting upon the entire band of a Yankee infantry regiment, who, having encamped at some distance from their troops, had been quite forsaken, and were still fast asleep when they were taken prisoners to the last man by our Mississippians. They seemed but little troubled at their fate, and cheerfully struck up the tunes of Dixie, to the great delight of our men, who meanwhile set about preparing for them whatever comforts our rough hospitality could afford. After about an hour's ride we reached Lee's Hill, where we found Captain Phillips again, whom I invited to join me in a little tour to Marye's Heights and the field in front of them, the horrors of which had been depicted in the most vivid colours by all who had visited the dreadful spot. As the Federal batteries on the opposite side of the river were firing on every horseman who showed himself, I took Pelham's mulatto servant, Newton, who happened to be there,

along with us, and, leaving our horses out of sight in his charge, we descended on foot to the plain. Here we met General Ransom, who had commanded one of the brigades on Marye's Heights which had sustained the principal shock of the assault; and the General's polite offer to show us the battle-field, and give us a description of the fight, was gratefully accepted.

The sight was indeed a fearful one, and the dead bodies lay thicker than I had ever seen before on any field of battle. This was chiefly the case in front of the stone wall which skirts the sunken road at the foot of Marye's Heights. The dead were here piled up in heaps six or eight deep. General Ransom told us that our men were ordered not to commence firing until the enemy had approached within a distance of eighty yards; but that from the moment they advanced within this, the hostile ranks had been completely mowed down by our volleys. The nature of the ground towards the town is open and flat, broken only by some plank fences, and dotted with a few wooden houses scattered here and there. All these objects, and even the very ground, were so thickly riddled with bullets that scarcely a square inch was without its dint; and it became incomprehensible to me how even that small few of the most dashing assailants, who had run up within fifteen paces of our

lines, could have survived this terrific fire long enough to do so. Many of the Federal soldiers had found death seeking shelter in the small courtyards of the houses behind the wooden plank fences surrounding them, but which, of course, offered not the slightest protection; and heaps of the corpses of these poor fellows filled the narrow enclosures. On a space of ground not over two acres we counted 680 dead bodies; and more than 1200 altogether were found on the small plain between the heights and Fredericksburg, those nearest the town having mostly been killed by our artillery, which had played with dreadful effect upon the enemy's dense columns. More than one-half of these dead had belonged to Meagher's brave Irish brigade, which was nearly annihilated during the several attacks.

A number of the houses which we entered presented a horrid spectacle—dead and wounded intermingled in thick masses. The latter, in a deplorable state from want of food and care, were cursing their own cause, friends, and commander-in-chief, for the sufferings they endured. As we walked slowly along, Captain Phillips suddenly pressed my arm, and, pointing to the body of a soldier whose head was so frightfully wounded that part of the brain was protruding, broke out with, "Great God, that man is still living!" And so he was. Hearing our steps

the unfortunate sufferer opened his glassy eyes and looked at us with so pitiable an expression that I could not for long after recall it without shuddering. A surgeon being close at hand, was at once called to the spot to render what assistance was yet possible; but he pronounced the man in a dying condition, and observed that it was totally opposed to all medical experience, and could only be considered in the light of a miracle, that a human being with such a wound should have lived through nearly sixty hours of exposure and starvation.

In the mean time our little company had attracted the notice of the enemy on the other side of the river, and several shells had already bowled over our heads, when soon the firing grew so heavy, and the missiles struck and exploded in such increasing proximity to us, that we decided on getting out of range. So, shaking hands with General Ransom and thanking him much for his kindness, we returned to the place where we had left our horses; but mulatto and chargers had disappeared together; and after a lengthened search, we had nearly made up our minds that we must return on foot, when the fugitives were found at a considerable distance and hidden in a clump of bushes, the worthy Newton still trembling, and completely "demoralised" with the fright inspired by some of the shells which, fired too high,

had exploded in his neighbourhood and induced his rapid retreat.

On our return to Lee's Hill we found a great number of the generals assembled around our Commander-in-Chief, all extremely chagrined that the Federals should have succeeded in so cleverly making their escape. The tranquillity in which the day passed off was interrupted only by the firing from the enemy's batteries, which, by the way, very nearly proved fatal to our friend Vizetelly. In the town of Fredericksburg a great many Yankees had been found straggling and lurking in the houses, either with a view to desertion, or too overpowered by the liquor they had stolen to leave with their army; and a body of those captives marching along the turnpike road escorted by a detachment of our soldiers, attracted the curiosity of Mr Vizetelly, who immediately rode down to meet them. Having reached the column, he had just entered into conversation with a corporal from a South Carolina regiment who commanded the detachment, when the hostile batteries, mistaking their own men for enemies, opened fire, and one of their very first shells, passing quite close to our friend, tore the head of the poor fellow with whom he was talking completely off his shoulders, scattering pieces of skull and brains in every direction.' Horror-stricken at this sad incident, and hav-

ing no call of duty to remain, the artist at once put spurs into his charger's flanks, and galloped off as fast as the noble steed could carry him. But the hostile gunners seemed to take particular pleasure in aiming at the flying horseman, and ever closer and closer flew the unpleasant missiles about his ears, while we who from Lee's Hill were spectators of the unenviable position in which our guest was placed, were for some time seriously alarmed that we should never again hear his merry laugh and joyous songs; but at last he reached us in safety, though much exhausted, and was received with loud cheering in our midst.

During the afternoon General Burnside renewed his request for the burial of the dead, which was at once granted; and the Federal troops destined to this duty, having crossed the Rappahannock in pontoons, went to work without delay. Having been again ordered to assist in the superintendence of the proceedings, I was painfully shocked at the inevitably rough manner in which the Yankee soldiers treated the dead bodies of their comrades. Not far from Marye's Heights existed a hole of considerable dimensions, which had once been an ice-house; and in order to spare time and labour, this had been selected by the Federal officers to serve as a large common grave, not less than 800 of their men being

buried in it. The bodies of these poor fellows, stripped nearly naked, were gathered in huge mounds around the pit, and tumbled neck and heels into it; the dull "thud" of corpse falling on corpse coming up from the depths of the hole until the solid mass of human flesh reached near the surface, when a covering of logs, chalk, and mud closed the mouth of this vast and awful tomb.

On my return to Lee's Hill I saw President Davis and Governor Letcher with our Commander. They had come from Richmond to congratulate him and the troops under him on their success, and had been greeted all along the lines with the utmost enthusiasm. It was late at night when we returned to headquarters, where I stretched my weary limbs along my blankets, intensely soothed with the balmy reflection that I was about to enjoy a long spell of rest for my body, and relief for my mind from the racking anxiety and emotion with which the too familiar but never familiarised sight of death and destruction had so long and deeply affected it.

CHAPTER XVIII.

QUIET CAMP LIFE—THE ARMY IN WINTER QUARTERS—A VISIT TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RAPPAHANNOCK—STUART'S EXPEDITION TO DUMFRIES—CHRISTMAS IN CAMP—PURCHASE OF A CARRIAGE AND HORSES—ENGLISH VISITORS.

NEITHER the thunder of cannon nor the sound of the bugle disturbed our peaceful slumbers on the morning of the 17th, and the sun stood high in the firmament when General Stuart's clear ringing voice assembled us again round the large common breakfast-table in his roomy tent. During the forenoon we had the pleasure of welcoming Mr Lawley and Captain Wynne among us, the latter of whom, a comrade and *compagnon de voyage* of Captain Phillips, had been detained in Richmond through illness. Amid his sufferings, he had eagerly listened to the rumours of the battle which had been fought and was expected to continue, and he had now hastened, though too late, to the scene of action. Both gentlemen expressed their sincere regret to have come a day after the fair, and envied very much Captain

Phillips, whose better fortune had procured him the magnificent spectacle of the great conflict. Our new guests had brought with them from Richmond a case of champagne as a present to the officers of the Staff, although the General himself never took anything stronger than water; but finding no conveyance at Hamilton's Crossing Station, they had, as ill luck would have it, been obliged to leave the precious burthen there under charge of a South Carolina sergeant, acting as hospital steward near that halting-place.

The following day Captain Wynne and Lawley started, accompanied by several members of our military family, for a ride over the battle-field, I myself undertaking an expedition after the anxiously coveted case of champagne; for although I entertained but slight hope of its having escaped the attention of the soldiers, I considered that there was a bare possibility of recovery, sufficient to make it worth while to risk the trouble in so valuable a cause. Alas! my worst fears were destined to be realised. Not a vestige of the case or of the faithless sergeant to whose keeping it had been trusted could I light on, and I had to return all chapfallen from my vain errand, and announce to my comrades that they must make the best of water and good spirits as a substitute for the effervescent stimulant; and, indeed, so

cheerily were we all disposed, that our indignation soon evaporated. Much to our sorrow, on the following day all our guests deserted us, and we were left to the unrelieved routine of camp life in all its dull and listless monotony. The bad weather, moreover, setting in with full force, the campaign might be regarded as completely at an end for the next two or three months; and as the hostile army was reported to have gone into winter quarters, our own soon followed the example.

The stroke of many axes rang through the surrounding forests and oak copses, and pine thickets dissolved from the view to give place to complete little towns of huts and log-houses, provided with comfortable fireplaces, from whose gigantic chimneys curled upwards gracefully and cheerily into the crisp winter air many a column of pale-blue smoke. Longstreet's corps remained opposite Fredericksburg and its immediate neighbourhood; Jackson's was stationed half-way between that place and Port Royal; and Stonewall himself had fixed his head-quarters about twelve miles from us, near the well-known plantation of the Corbyn family, called Moss-Neck. The weather became now every day worse, snow-storms alternating with rains and severe frosts; and if officers and men were tolerably well off under the circumstances, it was not so with our

poor beasts, whose condition, from want of food, exposure, and vermin, was pitiable indeed. The sheds and stables, improvised for them out of logs and pine-branches, offered but scant protection against the battering of wind, rain, and snow, which assailed them on all sides; penetrating through the lightly-thatched roofs, and the wretched quadrupeds stood for the most part knee-deep in water or slush. Ere long a disease bred out of this unhappy state of things showed itself, and spread rapidly throughout the camp, our cavalry and artillery losing more than one-fourth of their horses and mules. The symptoms of the malady became first visible just above the hoof, whence it gradually extended, eventually involving the entire limb. We received for forage a certain amount of Indian corn, which was supplied quite regularly; but hay and straw grew every day more scarce, and at last failed us altogether. I had in more opulent times prepared for myself a most luxurious couch of hay, on which I slept softly, as on a bed of eider-down; but the lamentations of my negro over the scarcity of "long forage," and, still more, the woeful aspect of my animals, soon prevailed on me to abandon this luxury, and lay the sacrifice in their troughs, to be hungrily devoured by my poor beasts. The mules withstood the effects of scarce fodder, cold, and wet, better than did the

horses. Especially was this exhibited in the case of my grey mule Kitt, for in spite of hard times she looked as gay and sleek as ever; but it must be added that she displayed an omnivorous appetite. All was fodder to her impartial palate, from pine-leaves to scraps of leather, and even the blankets with which I covered my horses were not safe from her voracity.

On the 21st we had a visit from Custis Lee, son of our Commander-in-Chief, and aide-de-camp to President Davis, who wished to inspect the battle-field and the town of Fredericksburg; and at his request General Stuart and I gladly accompanied him on the expedition. I had thus the first direct opportunity presented to me of leisurely inspecting the ruins of poor Fredericksburg, which, with its shattered houses, streets ript open, and demolished churches, impressed me sadly enough. The inhabitants had nearly all deserted the place, the only visible exceptions being here and there a wretched pauper or aged negro, to whom no refuge elsewhere was open, creeping noiselessly along the silent street. The brave soldiers of Barksdale's brigade, however, who had so nobly resisted the first attempt of the enemy to cross the river, were re-established in the town, and comfortably installed in several of the large buildings now abandoned. The firing of the

pickets having once more ceased, a network of friendly relations had begun again to connect them, and an interchange of communications also of the necessaries of life recommenced. To carry on these the most ingenious devices were resorted to, at some of which I was vastly amused. On reaching the river, we beheld quite a little fleet of small boats, from three to four feet in length, under full sail, with flying pennants, crossing backwards and forwards between the shores of the river, conveying tobacco and Richmond newspapers over to the Stafford side, and returning loaded in exchange with sugar and coffee and Northern journals. The diminutive craft were handled with considerable nautical skill, and rudder and sails set so deftly to wind and stream, that they always unerringly landed at the exact point of destination. Some days afterwards, this free-trade movement having outpassed the limits which were judged safe or convenient, a sudden embargo, in the shape of a severe and stringent order, was put upon the friendly traffic of foe with foe, to the mutual and unmitigated disgust of both sides.

Next day, under favour of a flag of truce sent by the Federals to negotiate an exchange of prisoners, I received a message from Baron H., an ex-officer of the Prussian army then serving on Burnside's Staff, appointing a rendezvous at Fredericksburg. Although

I set off at once, I found on reaching the town that H., impatient of waiting, or giving me up, had returned to the other side of the river. Vexed to have had my ride for nothing, I was, in no very good humour, turning my horse's head towards home, when I fell in with Major Fairfax of Longstreet's Staff and the officers bearing the flag of truce. After expressing their sympathy with my disappointment, they invited me over to the other side, the truce not having yet expired. I replied that I should not be justified in complying with their invitation, as I had not, like Major Fairfax, any business to transact, and should be running the risk of remaining longer on the Stafford side than I desired. My cautious scruples elicited a hearty laugh, and, pledging their personal honour for my safe return whenever I chose, they again pressed their rather extraordinary invitation in a manner that would have made it very uncourteous to decline. On reaching the opposite shore, Fairfax and I were soon surrounded by a circle of Federal officers proffering every mark of politeness and hospitality, the latter being manifested by the production of several bottles of wine and whisky, which were soon in brisk circulation. Meantime a number of orderlies had been despatched in search of H.; but after an hour of fruitless waiting I returned with Fairfax, first emptying, as we

took leave of our temporary hosts, a last cup to the speedy restoration of peace. On arriving at head-quarters I was greeted with a good scolding from Stuart for my escapade; an old fox, he said, should never under any circumstances trust his head in the lion's mouth.

On the 23d we had the pleasure of welcoming once more among us General Hampton, the distant position of whose brigade on the Rappahannock had rendered him a rare visitor of late; but as his absence had been well occupied, his enterprise and activity having inflicted considerable damage on the enemy, it was the less to be regretted. Among his achievements was a raid across the river towards the end of November, with a small detachment of his brigade, when he surrounded and took prisoners to a man two squadrons of a Pennsylvanian cavalry regiment. Twice again, in December, he made similar expeditions to the rear of the Federals with equal success, capturing on the last occasion a large waggon-train laden with forage, provisions, and sutlers' stores, out of the latter of which he now brought us a quantity of luxuries as a Christmas present.

As General Hampton had not yet visited the battle-field, I had much pleasure in tendering my services as his guide and companion on the occasion, and we did not return from the long rambling ride

we took over the ground till late in the evening. On the following day arrived Mrs Stuart from Richmond, taking up her residence at a plantation not more than half a mile from headquarters, in the hope of spending Christmas-day with her husband, but unfortunately without taking into her reckoning the extreme uncertainty of the General's movements, always, moreover, kept secret by him till the very last moment. Christmas-eve had been spent in calm unsuspicious enjoyment, amidst long gossips over old times and consultations on the preparations of the next day's festive fare; and we were slumbering peacefully in the early morning, when we were suddenly roused by the sound of the bugle. To my intense astonishment I learned from General Stuart that in an hour he would start on a wide-ranging raid in the rear of the Federal army. With bitter chagrin I found my poor horses reduced, by cold and hunger, to so miserable a condition that not one was fit for duty; two of them, indeed, perished within the next few days. All my efforts to procure a new charger failed, so scarce had horses become, and I had the mortification of seeing the General and those few of my comrades who happened to be in better plight than myself ride off without me to join the regiments, which had already, from an early hour, received marching orders. As usual, however, I did

not allow my discomfiture to affect me long, and my vexed spirit soon yielded to the consolation of an excellent "egg-nogg"* and a roast turkey, which formed the mainstay of a dinner to which I had been invited by my friend Dearing, of the artillery. Encamped with his battery close to headquarters, in a dense pine thicket, he had, with the help of his cannoneers, built himself the snuggest little log-hut imaginable; and I was entirely restored to equanimity, after dinner, when I heard from my host that Major M., Longstreet's quartermaster, had two horses for sale, one of which would exactly suit my purpose.

Not to let slip so good an opportunity of a remount, I started, the first thing in the morning, for Major M.'s camp, where I found that, though I had been quite correctly informed, my purchase would be saddled with onerous and unexpected conditions. The horses were not to be sold separate; but, more than this, a lumbering family carriage was to go with

* Egg-nogg is an American drink which chiefly comes into notice at Christmas time, and in the good old days scarcely a house in Virginia was without a large bowl of this beverage standing in the hall on Christmas-day from morning till night for all to help themselves at. It consists of eggs beaten up with sugar, milk, and the indispensable ingredient of whisky or brandy. It is very agreeable to the taste, and has the dangerous property of concealing its strength under the guise of an innocent softness of savour, thus exerting its intoxicating influence on the inexperienced before the least suspicion is aroused.

them into the bargain. The conditions were absolute, both coach and horses having belonged to a friend of the quartermaster, who, holding a plantation within the lines of the enemy, had, in wholesome fear of Yankee depredators, sent him the entire equipage. It was certainly an odd thing for a cavalry officer in the field to become owner of a stately family coach; nevertheless, I had no alternative, and so, having paid the comparatively cheap sum of 800 dollars for the whole concern, I drove off with my bargain. The laughter and wonderment which greeted my appearance at headquarters, gravely tooling my carriage and pair up to my tent, may be easily conceived.

This setting up of my carriage became an inexhaustible source of joking and bantering, to which I had to submit with the best grace I could; never did jest wear so well or so long; it outlasted by a long span the poor old carriage, its parent, which, after serving on many a merry expedition with the young ladies of the neighbourhood, gradually succumbed to the shocks of the rough roads and 'cross-country jaunts; and in a few weeks its frame had, bit by bit, resolved itself into its component parts. Only a heap of ruins at my tent door, and the cushions, which served me excellently for pillows, remained as outward and visible tokens of its exist-

ence. But the joke lived still, and even General Lee, by no means addicted to the jocular vein, would frequently, on parade or in the battle-field, come out with, "Major, where's your carriage?" and once, in the midst of fighting, he exclaimed, "If we only had your carriage, what a splendid opportunity to charge the enemy with *it*!"

On the evening of the same day I mounted my grey mule Kitt, the steed I generally selected for night excursions such as that I was bent on, and paid a visit to Longstreet's headquarters, distant not more than a mile and a half. With the officers of his Staff, as with the General himself, I was on excellent terms, and we used to assemble in a large tent which Major Latrobe, Major Fairfax, and Captain Rodgers occupied together, or else in a large hospital-tent in which the three doctors of the Staff—Cullen, Barksdale, and Maury—chummed together with a most harmonious result. The mess arrangements at Longstreet's headquarters were always more satisfactorily ordered than those of our own, especially in the matter of fluids, to which Stuart objected altogether, while I far from shared his aversion; so that, whenever I felt disposed to spend a sociable evening where the genial glass was not excluded, I took refuge with these cheerful com-

panions, from whom I knew I could always reckon on a warm welcome.

Quickly did these pleasant evenings pass away, as we related the incidents by flood and field within our experience, or occasionally broke into song. In the latter respect Captain Rodgers was our chief performer; and when he was in thorough good-humour, he would enliven us with reminiscences of his stay among the Mormons, interspersed with select specimens of Brigham Young's psalmody. Whenever Latrobe's party fell short of liquor, the doctors were sure to be in a condition to supply the void; and when Kitt was sent over to them, with a polite invitation, it was generally answered by the simultaneous appearance of the three doctors in person, mounted one behind the other on the brave little mule, and bringing along with them the necessary materials for our social enjoyment. My return from these camp assemblies was invariably at an advanced hour of the night, and often did I owe my safe arrival at camp to Kitt's wonderful knowledge of the road. Once at my tent door, I would just relieve her of saddle and bridle, and let her gallop to the stable, whence the welcoming neigh of my black horse would soon after apprise me of the safe arrival of his intimate friend.

We were much cheered on the following day by

the happy return of the waggons which had been despatched in charge of couriers to Loudoun County for provisions to furnish forth our Christmas dinner. The presence of some scouting Yankee cavalry on the road had delayed our messengers; but though too late to do honour to the Christian feast, not the less welcome were the good things they had brought. Among these were thirty dozen eggs, sweet potatoes and butter in abundance, and some score of turkeys. These last-named visitors to our camp were the object of the most polite attentions. In a few hours a magnificent mansion, built of small pine-trees and brushwood, was prepared for them by the united efforts of officers, couriers, and negroes, whose zeal was worthy of the occasion. Stuart's mulatto servant, Bob, was appointed major-domo and body-guard of the household and its inmates—an office which he discharged with no less skill than gallantry, when later the enterprising Texans encamped in our neighbourhood organised a regular succession of nightly marauding expeditions for the capture of our *rarœ aves*.

The replenishment of our stock of provisions which had been thus effected appeared the more timely and valuable when, the same evening, we learned by telegram that Lawley would arrive the following day with two of his countrymen, the Marquess of Hartington and Colonel Leslie, both members of the British Par-

liament, on a voyage of inquiry, who intended to honour us with a visit. The preparations for their reception were rapidly made with that alacrity which distinguishes the hospitality of soldiers in camp, where all vie with each other in sacrificing their own comforts to render the entertainment of a visitor as agreeable as possible. I myself, having a large round Sibley tent, which, besides an ample fireplace, contained the luxury of a small iron stove, gave it up to be tenanted by the new-comers, and emigrated to a smaller one in which I had scarcely room to turn. Others contributed blankets, of which an abundance was forthcoming. A table and camp-stool were supplied, and the equipments even included a small looking-glass, which dangled from the tent-pole, giving altogether, with the rest of the arrangements, an air of luxury and comfort which was quite palatial.

It was close upon dinner-time when our visitors made their appearance; and after their luggage was stowed in safety, and they had been shown into their temporary domicile, we had the pleasure of conducting them to their place at the long camp dinner-table, the presence on which of a fat turkey and some other dainties evidently created surprise, and exceeded the expectations of our guests as to the manner in which they were destined to fare. We had made every effort to procure some liquor for the occasion,

but all we succeeded in getting was a large barrel of blackberry wine, captured by our cavalry pickets. Whatever was thought by our visitors of this extraordinary beverage, they were polite enough to pronounce it excellent. Lawley being already acquainted with the members of the Staff, we soon became on good terms with his two friends, and the night was far on ere we separated.

The moment we had finished breakfast next morning our horses were in readiness, and we all started for a ride to Fredericksburg, and over the battle-field, which presented itself to the astonished eyes of our English friends still stained with blood, and with the marks still fresh, in all their horror, of the past work of desolation and destruction. The day wound up with a great Fandango in Stuart's roomy tent, enlivened with Sweeney's songs and banjo-playing to negro dances; and a monster egg-nogg was prepared, in the mixing of which even Lord Hartington and Colonel Leslie lent their inexperienced hands in beating up the eggs—a part of the preparation, by the way, which requires no little skill, and is, moreover, intensely laborious; and when, after several hours of merriment, we separated at a late hour, both of them agreed that camp life was, after all, not so unendurable.

On the morning of the 30th our guests paid a visit

to General Lee, where I joined them, and we rode off together to Moss-Neck, Jackson's headquarters, a distance, as has been mentioned, of twelve miles. We arrived about midday, and were received in a small pavilion attached to the main building, where the General had been prevailed upon, at the urgent request of the owner, to take up his abode. Old Stonewall so fascinated his English visitors by his kind and pleasant manners and the resources of his conversation, that, quite against their previous intentions, they accepted his invitation to dinner, and instead of a visit of twenty minutes, many hours were spent under the General's roof—hours that sped so rapidly, that when Lawley bethought himself to look at his watch, it was discovered to be very near the hour when we were all expected back to supper with General Lee. Away we started at full gallop; but though our horses were urged to their topmost speed, we reached headquarters far behind our time, and the General had long since taken his simple meal. To Lawley's excuses for our unintentional unpoliteness he laughingly replied, "Gentlemen, I hope Jackson has given you a good dinner, and if so, I am very glad things have turned out as they have, for I had given the invitation without knowing the poor state of my mess provisions, and should scarcely have been able to offer you anything."

The 31st was quietly spent at headquarters in the discharge of our camp duties and the enjoyment of the bright warm sunshine with which for the space of a few days the winter in Virginia is favoured. Our guests accommodated themselves with admirable facility and good-humour to the discomforts of a soldier's life, and insisted that we should not make any change for them in our ordinary routine, but let them fare exactly as the rest. Accordingly Lord Hartington and Lawley might at one time be seen, their sleeves rolled up, busily washing their pocket-handkerchiefs, and not far off Colonel Leslie energetically at work with a huge pole beating up a heap of mud to a proper temper for the construction of a new chimney to Major Fitzhugh's tent. The day following had been fixed on by our English friends for their departure, but as we had good reason to expect Stuart's immediate return, they yielded to our persuasions and consented to await his arrival, accepting meanwhile an invitation to General Jenkins of South Carolina, where we had an excellent dinner, and enjoyed a very pleasant evening listening to the music of one of the regimental bands, considered the best in the whole army. On returning at a late hour to our headquarters we found to our great delight that Stuart had come back from his raid, which had proved most successful, and resulted in the capture

of numerous prisoners and a large amount of booty. Accordingly the General was in buoyant spirits, and gave us a most entertaining account of the entire expedition.

He had as usual operated far in the rear of the Yankees, had damaged their communications, and contrived, moreover, to throw a great part of the army and the generals sent in pursuit of him into a state of utter confusion by intercepting their telegraphic messages, and answering them himself in a manner that scattered his eager pursuers in opposite directions all over the country. General Stuart was always accompanied by his own telegraph operator, who had no difficulty in connecting his portable instrument at any point of the wires, and could thus read off and reply to the messages *in transitu*. One of these, on the occasion in question, was addressed to the Quartermaster-General, who had just sent off to the Federal army a large number of mules, all of which had fallen into the hands of Stuart. Accordingly, the following message was despatched to this official:—

"I am much satisfied with the transport of mules lately sent, which I have taken possession of, and ask you to send me soon a new supply.

"J. E. B. STUART."

The excitement and consternation this produced in the Northern capital may be imagined. But besides these bloodless devices there had been a good deal of hard fighting in the course of this expedition, and we had to mourn, among others, the loss of the gallant Captain Bullock, whose name has already occurred in these Memoirs. While being carried with a severe wound from the field by one of his friends, a second shot struck him and ended his life. The time had now come when the departure of our friends could no longer be delayed, and they took leave of us the following morning, the carriage I had purchased coming into requisition to drive them over (which I did with my own hands) to the station at Hamilton's Crossing.

CHAPTER XIX.

LIFE IN CAMP DURING JANUARY AND FEBRUARY—AN ENGLISH VISITOR—RIDE TO A WEDDING—A NEW ENGLISH VISITOR—A FORTNIGHT AT CULPEPPER COURT-HOUSE—FIGHT AT KELLEY'S FORD—PELHAM'S DEATH AND FUNERAL HONOURS IN RICHMOND—BREAKING-UP OF WINTER QUARTERS.

WITH the New Year set in a continuance of bad weather. The cold increased, snow and damp alternated in rapid succession, and our poor animals continued exposed to the severest hardships. As for my own plight, I had returned to my large tent, where I managed by a variety of ingenious shifts, the offspring of hard necessity, to surround myself with not a few practical comforts. A planked floor was laid down, and over it was spread the rough resemblance of a carpet in the shape of a large square of old canvass; a packing-case which had served for the despatch of saddlery from the ordnance department did duty very efficiently for a bedstead; and with an empty whisky-cask, which, by sawing down on one side to within a foot of the floor, stuffing the

bottom with blankets, and leaving only so much of the upper portion as would comfortably support the back, became a capital easy-chair, my assemblage of "sticks" was by no means contemptible. With the inward man, however, matters began to assume a very unsatisfactory condition. While the Christmas provision could be still eked out, we got on well enough, though at the cost of many an alarm sounded by the vigilant Bob, and many a hurried night-chase given to the Texan marauders to preserve the turkeys, while any yet survived, to our own use. But when the last of these interesting animals had in due turn adorned the mess-table, the dearth of food which thereafter ensued and continued was most painfully felt by officers and men. The almost invariable message with which our negroes returned from the commissary was, "Nothing to be had;" and when by an extraordinary chance they were enabled to bring back some sort of supplies, these consisted of beef so tough or bacon so rancid that only the sharpest pangs of hunger could induce a human being to tackle it as food. By using bullets cut into small pieces as a substitute for shot, I managed to bring down with my gun a number of small birds, such as blackbirds, robins, and sparrows, and so to purvey a certain modicum of fresh animal food, but so limited that there was never enough to satisfy the whole

company; and often would four or five small birds appear at our long mess-table, to be divided among twelve hungry men, for any one of whom they would have been but a scanty meal. On one occasion a windfall came to us from the Lower Rappahannock (called the Tappahannock), in the shape of a waggon-load of oysters. These we fed on with great relish for a few days; but, being destitute of salt, pepper, or butter, or any condiment that might replace them, they soon palled, and a delicacy which would have been prized, under other circumstances, beyond all expression, became so nauseous that the very sight of an oyster turned us sick.

It was a tantalising fact, in the midst of our famine, to know that a flock of sheep existed in the neighbourhood, the property of an old planter, who, however, obstinately refused to part with one of them except at the most exorbitant price. No entreaties in the world could induce the obdurate old gentleman to abate his demands; and the consequence was, that he ultimately suffered for his greed in the manner we are about to relate. Day after day these sheep would be found straying about our camp, attracted by the fodder of our horses, which was not a little diminished by their felonious nibblings. We had the greatest trouble to prevent these depredations; and, moreover, the sight to our hungry eyes

of fat loins enriched at our expense, but on which we were prohibited to feed, added insult to injury. After sending several warnings to the old flockmaster, our couriers hit upon a cunning device, which should at once rid them of a nuisance and procure them delicious mutton. Deep trenches were dug wherever the sheep were in the habit of trespassing, ostensibly for the protection of our provender; and these, being covered with pine branches and straw, became so many pitfalls into which the poor animals tumbled, rolling over and over, and seldom escaping without such injuries as necessitated their immediate slaughter. The accident was then notified, not without bitter complaints, to the proprietor, who, having himself no use for the entire carcass, would make the best of the matter by selling us the greater part of the meat; and this mode of purveying mutton lasted till the old planter was persuaded to take better care of his flock.

In spite of deficient food, scanty supply of blankets, and extreme scarcity of shoe-leather, in the midst of the most trying weather, the good spirits of the army were unabated. Joyous sounds of song and laughter broke forth continuously from amidst the camps, and the bands of all the different regiments played merrily every evening. A theatre even was erected, where the performances of negro minstrels

and other entertainments afforded immense delight to officers and men, and attracted all the young ladies of the neighbourhood. About the middle of the month some interruption to the usual monotonous routine of our camp was made by the visit of Colonel Bramston, of the battalion of Grenadier Guards stationed in Canada, with whom I, with great pleasure, shared the accommodation of my tent. The shortness of his furlough, however, deprived us of his presence a few days after his arrival. Just at this time a pressing invitation came to the General and myself from our friends at Dundee, in Hanover County, where Dr P.'s eldest daughter was to be married to Dr Fontaine, one of our comrades then acting as surgeon to Fitz Lee's brigade. That we could accept it seemed impossible; for on the very same day a review of William Lee's command was ordered to take place near Moss-Neck, Jackson's headquarters, and the distance thence to our friend's house was not less than five-and-forty miles. Nevertheless, to leave still a chance open, and hoping I might persuade Stuart to undertake the ride, I sent a courier with a relay of horses to Bowling-Green, a village about half-way between Moss-Neck and the spot we were to reach. It seemed as if the review would never be over; hour after hour flitted by, till at last it was a quarter to three by the time all was

over, when Stuart rode over to me, and called out with a laugh, "Well, Von! how about the wedding? Shall we go?" Without hesitation I declared myself ready, only observing that as the wedding ceremony was appointed at seven o'clock we should have some difficulty in being present. "Oh, that's nothing," rejoined the General—"let's be off." And away we started at the rate of ten miles an hour. Bowling-Green was reached in capital time, where we mounted our relays; and before the clock struck the appointed hour of seven we rode through the gate of the hospitable Dundee.

A joyful and most demonstrative reception awaited us, for our arrival had been given up; and though our high riding-boots covered with mud, and splashed uniforms, presented a contrast to the elegant dresses of the ladies and the correct costumes of the gentlemen, the favour with which we were regarded was none the less marked. Stuart was in his element, and the gayest of the gay. When the ceremony was over we amused ourselves with music, songs, and *tableaux vivants*. In one of the latter I had the honour of performing a prominent part in conjunction with a very pretty young lady, Miss Antoinette P., with whom it was my pleasing office to form a group imitating the coat of arms of the State of Virginia, bearing the motto, *Sic semper tyrannis*, which

the soldiers translated, "Take your foot off my neck," from the action of the principal figure in the group in question, representing Liberty, who, with a lance in her right hand, is standing over the conquered and prostrate tyrant, and apparently trampling on him with her heel. To play the part of the poor tyrant who is suffering this ill-treatment, as it was my lot to do, would, I confess, under ordinary circumstances, offer but little gratification even to the most humbly disposed; but when the avenging goddess of Liberty is beautiful, and spurns you with a foot of such small proportions as in this case, the position of the conquered party is one of comparative triumph and felicity. Our performance gave as much satisfaction to the spectators as it certainly did to myself; and as for the General, his enthusiasm appeared excessive, for he insisted on having the *tableau* repeated several times; but it turned out that this was pure benevolence towards me, for he rallied me afterwards, saying he was sure I wanted to be *sic semper*. At last daylight streaming through the jalousies gave the signal for our party to break up, and seek the rest of which I myself felt in extreme want.

Doleful in my ears was the sound of Stuart's voice ordering our horses, and welcome was the rain which soon after poured down in torrents and caused Stuart's iron will to give way and yield to the urgent solicita-

tions of our host to remain through the day, which, gloomy as it continued outside, did not damp the gaiety with which within doors the hours were wiled away till deep in the night, when we took leave of the company, and just as they were retiring comfortably to rest, set off on our long ride through the dark, chill, rainy morning. About half-way home we were met by a courier with a message informing us that the enemy had been making serious demonstrations on the river between Fredericksburg and Port Royal; so, urging our steeds to a quicker pace, we made all haste to gain headquarters, and it was still quite early in the morning when, having reached our destination, we found that the heavy rain had conveniently impeded the movements and altered the intention of the Yankees, among whom all again was quiet.

Towards the end of the month we received the visit of another Englishman, Captain Bushby, who turned out a warm admirer of Confederate principles, and a stanch sympathiser with the cause; and though he made but a short stay with us, ere he left he had become a general favourite at headquarters. Captain Bushby had just run the blockade into Charleston, after an exciting chase by the Federal cruisers, and could only spare a few days to look at our army and make acquaintance with its most conspicuous leaders,

for several of whom he had brought very acceptable presents. To General Lee he presented an English saddle of the best make, to General Stuart a breech-loading carbine, while for Jackson he had provided himself with an india-rubber bed. For the presentation of this last article I escorted him to old Stonewall's headquarters; and on the ride an occasion befell me of astonishing my English friend and myself not a little, by a wonderful shot with my revolver, bringing down, as we galloped along, a turkey buzzard flying high overhead. I must confess I was vain enough to assume the air of treating the extraordinary success of this shot as a matter quite of course, whereas it was much more the result of accident than good shooting. Jackson received us with all his usual affability, and was much pleased with the present, promising to use it regularly. During the conversation which ensued, Captain Bushby asked the General for his autograph—a request which was at once granted; but in the act of writing, a blot fell on the paper, which was immediately thrown on the floor as useless. Bushby, however, picked it up and carefully treasured it in his pocket; and Jackson, noticing this action, said, with a modest smile, "Oh Captain, if you value my simple signature so much, I will give you a number of them with the greatest pleasure," and thereupon

filled a large sheet with his sign-manual and presented it to him.

The condition of our horses continued to grow worse and worse, especially in Hampton's brigade, on which was imposed the fatiguing duty of picketing nearly forty miles of the Rappahannock, with very few opportunities of procuring provisions. In consequence of this state of things, I was ordered, in the commencement of February, by Stuart to proceed in that direction on a tour of inspection. It was a mournful sight to see more than half the horses of this splendid command totally unfit for duty, dead and dying animals lying about the camps in all directions. One regiment had lost thirty-one horses in less than a week. According to the recommendation of my report, Fitz Lee's brigade, which for months had been having a comparatively good time, was at once ordered to relieve Hampton's command; and Stuart wishing personally to hold a final inspection of the two brigades, Pelham, Lieutenant Price, and myself, were on the 17th ordered to proceed to Culpepper, where the General and the rest of his Staff would join us next day. We set off in the midst of a snowstorm, which increased in violence every hour. The snow ere long lay a foot deep, and the track of the road was soon so completely obliterated, that we stood in danger, in the midst of the vast wilderness

and forest tract, which in that part of the country extends for many miles, of being lost altogether. At last, however, just as night was falling, we reached the house of a free negro, situated about ten miles from our ultimate destination. Both ourselves and our horses were now about equally near exhaustion, and further progress being out of the question, we determined to seek shelter in this abode until the morning. But the hospitality we had reckoned on was not granted so readily as we had anticipated. After gaining, through the open door, a glimpse of a comfortable interior lit up by the blaze of a huge wood-fire, whose friendly warmth seemed almost at that distance to reach our shivering limbs, what was our dismay at being suddenly shut out from this paradise, and having the door slammed in our faces, with the remark on the part of the black-faced proprietor of the mansion, that he would have "nothing to do with no stragglers."

Our disappointment was utter, for the position we were thus left in was, in fact, desperate, and for some minutes we stood wrapt in disconsolate silence. At last Pelham broke out: "This won't do at all; we can't possibly go on: to remain out of doors in this terrible weather is certain destruction; and as we are under the obligation of preserving our lives as long as possible, for the sake of our cause and our coun-

try, I am going to fool this stupid old nigger, and play a trick off on him, which I think quite pardonable under the circumstances." Having by repeated loud knocks induced the inhospitable negro to reopen the door, he addressed him thus: "Mr Madden" (this was the man's name), "you don't know what a good friend of yours I am, or what you are doing when you are about to treat us in this way. That gentleman there" (pointing to me) "is the great General Lee himself; the other one is the French ambassador just arrived from Washington" (this alluded to Price, who, being lately from Europe, and much better equipped than the rest, had rather a foreign appearance); and I am a staff-officer of the General's, who is quite mad at being kept waiting outside so long after riding all this way on purpose to see you. In fact, if you let him stay any longer here in the cold, I'm afraid he'll shell your house as soon as his artillery comes up." The old negro was so perfectly staggered by this long harangue, which was uttered with a perfectly serious countenance, that he immediately invited us in, with all manner of excuses for his mistake. Our horses were soon sheltered in an empty stable, and such a feed of corn was laid before them as they had not had for a long time, while we dried our garments before the blazing wood-fire, our present sense of comfort being enhanced by anticipa-

tions of the future raised by the savoury odours which reached us from the kitchen, where Mr Madden was superintending in person the preparation of a repast suited to the distinguished rank of his guests. Pelham was delighted at the success of his diplomatic ruse, and went on hoaxing the old negro in the same strain, till nothing could persuade him that all he had been told was not quite true; and though in the morning we endeavoured to undeceive him, and paid him a liberal indemnity for the stratagem, he continued to inflate himself with a sense of his own importance at having been honoured with a visit from such distinguished guests.

We reached Hampton's headquarters, near Culpepper Court-house, before noon, where we met Stuart; and in the evening we all went by invitation to the village, where Fitz Lee's men had got up a negro-minstrel entertainment, and, with the assistance of Sweeney and Bob, succeeded in giving us a performance which would have rivalled any in London. Next day Stuart started for Richmond, accompanied by his Staff, leaving Pelham and myself, with some of our couriers, at Culpepper. We took up our quarters at the large Virginia Hotel, where we had the satisfaction of having our horses once more well stabled, and our own comfort cared for in every possible way by the stout landlady, who

seemed bent on showing her gratitude for some service we had rendered her son, a private in Fitz Lee's brigade.

Culpepper Court-house is a pleasant village of several hundred inhabitants, and the main street, in which we were located, is lined with pretty villa-like residences. The street itself, however, was without pavement, and the constant snow and rain had soaked into the red clayey soil so completely that the mud was several feet deep, and the passage of any vehicle through it being out of the question, we were literally confined to our own side of the street. To overcome this inconvenience Pelham and I set to work to construct a sort of bridge, by resting planks on a number of blocks of stone, and by this means we were enabled to pay frequent vists to the house of our opposite neighbour, Mr S., where we were treated with great kindness, and our time passed pleasantly away. A constant visitor, like ourselves, at this house was Major Eales of Rosser's regiment, who, being just released from a Yankee prison, and still on parole, relished the gaiety of our society with peculiar zest. The fortune of war played sad havoc with this happy trio. Poor Pelham expired not many weeks after in the very house where he had so pleasantly spent his time; and in a few months Eales was killed on the day

before I myself received a wound which at the time was regarded as mortal.

Although we expected Stuart back in a few days, it was a fortnight before we heard from him, when we received a telegram ordering us back to head-quarters at Fredericksburg. We felt very sad at leaving pleasant old Culpepper, and the hardships and monotony of our camp life fell on us the more heavily after an interval of comparative ease and abundance. The remnant of February and a part of March dragged slowly by, so dull and eventless that existence was scarcely tolerable, and we looked forward to the commencement of spring and the re-opening of the campaign with intense longing. On the 15th of March Stuart left for Culpepper, where he had to appear as a witness at a court-martial; and Pelham, who was very anxious to see our lady friends there again, accompanied him—a pleasure which I was not allowed to share, as the General had placed me in charge over the pickets at the different fords up the Rappahannock, from Fredericksburg to the mouth of the Rapidan. On the morning of the 17th, which was one of those mild, hazy March days that betoken the approach of spring, we were suddenly stirred up, in the midst of our lazy, listless existence, by the sound of a cannonade which seemed to come from the direction of

United States Ford on the Rappahannock, about ten miles above Fredericksburg. I was in my saddle in a moment, fancying that the enemy was attempting to force a passage at one of the points placed under my charge; but when I had galloped in hot haste up to the river, I found that the firing was much further off, and, as it seemed to me, towards the mouth of the Rapidan. This supposition proved to be correct, for when I reached my pickets I received a report that a heavy fight was going on in the direction of Culpepper Court-house, near Kelley's Ford, at least fifteen miles in a straight line higher up the river. The cannonade, which seemed growing louder and fiercer all through the morning, gradually slackened as the day advanced, and in the evening, when I returned to camp, was completely silenced.

The country bordering the Rappahannock is covered with dense forest, whence it has justly acquired the name of the Wilderness, and in many places it presents scenes of wild and romantic beauty. It is not traversed by regular roads, but a number of small bridle-paths wind through the tangled undergrowth of laurels and brambles, which, interlacing with the vines and creepers that hang down from the larger trees, form thickets which no human being could penetrate. It was a beautiful calm evening, the silence of which

was broken only by the song of the thrush or the monotonous tapping of the woodpecker—one of those evenings that seem made for a melancholy and sentimental mood; and, strange to say, by such a mood was I now completely overcome, my thoughts constantly reverting to my dear friend Pelham, with an obstinate foreboding that some dreadful fate must have befallen him.

A trifling incident occurred near headquarters which happened to amuse me, and sufficed to divert my thoughts from their melancholy course. On my way towards the river I had consulted a sturdy farmer as to a short cut, and now, on my return, I met him again; but as I had since our first meeting taken off my cloak and tied it to the saddle, the old fellow did not recognise me as his morning's acquaintance, and accosted me thus: "Have you met a fellow on the road in a big overcoat, and riding a horse something like yours? He asked me some questions, and talked very like a Dutchman. My notion is he's nothing more than a d—d Yankee spy." Whereupon I informed him that I was the identical person; but nothing could persuade him of this, for he now vowed I had no Dutch accent at all, and, in fact, complimented me on my excellent English pronunciation. So I left him to his obstinate conviction, and continued my route to the camp, which I reached shortly after dark.

Next morning, about an hour before daylight, I was roused from my slumbers by hearing some one riding up to my tent, and startled out of bed by the voice of one of the couriers Stuart had taken with him, who, with much agitation of manner, reported that the General had been engaged with Fitz Lee's brigade in a sanguinary battle against far superior numbers of the enemy, and had beaten them, but at the cost of many lives, and among them that of Pelham, the gallant chief of our horse-artillery. Poor Pelham! He had but just received his promotion to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, and now met his death in a comparatively small engagement, after passing safely through so many great battles. Being on a visit of pleasure, he had been taken unprepared, and, at the first sound of the cannon, hastened unarmed, on a horse borrowed from Sweeney, to the field of action. His batteries had not come up to answer the enemy's cannon, but his ardour would not allow him to wait for their arrival, and he rushed forward into the thickest of the fight, cheering on our men and animating them by his example. When one of our regiments advancing to charge was received with such a terrible fire by the enemy as to cause it to waver, Pelham galloped up to them, shouting, "Forward, boys! forward to victory and glory!" and at the same moment a fragment of a shell, which exploded

close over his head, penetrated the back part of the skull, and stretched the young hero insensible on the ground. He was carried at once to Culpepper, where the young ladies of Mr S.'s family tended him with sisterly care; but he never again recovered his senses, and the same evening his noble spirit departed. This sad intelligence spread through the whole camp in a few minutes, and the impression of melancholy sorrow it produced on all is beyond description, so liked and admired had Pelham been, and so proud were we of his gallantry. One after the other, comrades entered my tent to hear the confirmation of the dreadful news, which everybody tried as long as possible not to credit. Couriers and negroes assembled outside, all seemingly paralysed by the sudden and cruel calamity; and when morning came, instead of the usual bustling activity and noisy gaiety, a deep and mournful silence reigned throughout the encampment. I was much touched by the behaviour of Pelham's negro servants, Willis and Newton, who, with tokens of the greatest distress, begged to be allowed at once to go and take charge of their master's body—a permission which I was, however, constrained to refuse.

Early in the morning I received a telegram from Stuart ordering me to proceed by the next train to Hanover Junction, there to receive Pelham's body

and bring it to Richmond, and then to make all the arrangements necessary to have it conveyed to Alabama, his native State. I started at once and reached the Junction in time to receive the corpse, which, along with several others, was enclosed in a simple wooden case and under the charge of one of our artillerymen, who, with tears in his eyes, gave me the particulars of his gallant commander's death. I did not reach Richmond until late at night, and not finding the hearse, which I had telegraphed to be in readiness, at the station, was obliged to remove the body into the town in a common one-horse waggon. Immediately on arriving I went to Governor Letcher, an old and stanch friend of Stuart's and mine, who kindly afforded all the assistance in his power, and placed a room at my disposal in the Capitol, where the Confederate Congress held its sessions. The coffin was placed in it, covered with the large flag of the State of Virginia, and a guard of honour was placed over it. The next day I procured a handsome iron coffin, and with my own hands assisted in transferring the body to its new receptacle. I was overcome with grief as I touched the lifeless hand that had so often pressed mine in the grasp of friendship. His manly features even in death expressed that fortitude and pride which distinguished him. By special request I had a small glass window let into the coffin-

lid just over the face, that his friends and admirers might take a last look at the young hero, and they came in troops, the majority being ladies, who brought garlands and magnificent bouquets to lay upon the coffin. Meantime I had communicated with several members of Congress from Alabama, friends of Pelham's father, and it had been decided that his remains should be conveyed to Alabama in charge of a young soldier, a connection of the family, who had just been released from one of the Richmond hospitals. The afternoon of the following day was appointed for the departure, and at five o'clock we carried the coffin to the station, the Richmond battalion of infantry doing the military honours, and a large number of dignitaries of the Confederate States, friends and comrades, following. Alabama paid as solemn a tribute of respect to her gallant son as he deserved to have shown him. As soon as the frontier of the State was reached, a guard of honour escorted the coffin, and at every station on the road ladies were waiting to adorn it with flowers.

General Stuart arrived in Richmond on the day following, still deeply affected by the loss of his young friend, and greatly grieved that he had not been able to attend the funeral ceremonies. Having obtained leave to remain in Richmond a few days, I saw many of my old friends again, and among them

Lawley, through whom I made acquaintance with Prince Polignac, who was serving as a brigadier-general of infantry in the Western Army. On my return to headquarters another sad message came to us, announcing the death of Captain Redmond Burke, who was attached to our Staff. While with a scouting party on the Upper Potomac with two of his sons, he had been imprudent enough to remain during the night at a house close to the enemy's position at Shepherdstown. The Yankees, informed by treachery of his presence, sent a body of cavalry after him, who surrounded the house and summoned the inmates to surrender; but the brave trio sought to break through the compact circle, and in the attempt Burke himself was killed, one son was wounded, and the other taken prisoner. Not long afterwards we heard of the death of Lieutenant Turner, a promising young officer of our Staff, who had been despatched with certain instructions to the well-known guerilla chief Mosby, and had been severely wounded in a skirmish which took place the very day of his arrival. Having been left at a plantation within the enemy's lines, he was in a fair way of recovery, when a small party of Federal cavalry entered the house, tore him from his bed, and so ill-treated the poor fellow that his wounds reopened and he died shortly after. All these misfortunes did not fail to cast a gloom over our little

military family; and it was an intense relief to us when, on the 9th of April, we received orders to march to Culpepper Court-house; and the ringing of the bugle sounding to horse and announcing the commencement of a new campaign, with all its wild excitement, raised our spirits once more to the highest pitch.

CHAPTER XX.

THE SPRING CAMPAIGN OF 1863: CAMP NEAR CULPEPPER—FIGHTS ON THE RAPPAHANNOCK—VISIT OF A PRUSSIAN OFFICER—RIDES IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD—HOOKER'S ADVANCE AND FLANK MARCH—NIGHT-FIGHT NEAR TOD'S TAVERN.

On our arrival at Culpepper we found it greatly improved in aspect. True, the roads were still nearly impassable; but the country round, under the influence of frequent rains and the mild air of April, had clothed itself in tender verdure, interspersed here and there with blooming patches by the now blossoming peach orchards. Our headquarters were established not more than a quarter of a mile from Culpepper, on a height thickly covered with pine and cedar trees, skirted by the road leading to Orange Court-house, and commanding a view of the village and the surrounding country, picturesquely bordered in the distance by the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains. Only W. Lee's and Fitz Lee's brigades were with us. The former picketed the fords in the immediate vicinity of

Culpepper, and the latter was stationed higher up the river. Hampton's command had been left behind for recruiting, most of its dismounted men having been furloughed to their distant homes in Mississippi and the Carolinas to supply themselves with fresh horses. Our animals were now beginning to get into better condition, forage having become more abundant, and being valuably supplemented by the new grass and clover. Provisions for the men had also grown more plentiful, and our kind friends in the neighbourhood did their best to keep the mess-table of the General and his Staff copiously supplied.

In the mean time, after the battle of Fredericksburg, the supreme command had been transferred into the hands of General Hooker, an officer who had gained a high reputation by his gallantry—he was nicknamed by his men "Fighting Joe"—and the good management of his division, but who eventually proved himself to be utterly incapable of commanding a large army. Great credit, however, was due to him for having availed himself of the interval of inaction to improve his cavalry, which was now completely recruited, men and horses, and augmented by fresh brigades; while new order and discipline had been instilled into the entire force. A large part of the cavalry of the Army of the

Potomac, as it was still called, had been concentrated on the Upper Rappahannock, and it was this fact which had caused our rapid departure from Fredericksburg. The restless activity of our neighbours on the other side of the river, their constant marching and countermarching, indicated that some serious enterprise was impending; and the renewal of the picket-firing created the daily expectation, after so long an interval of tranquillity, of a brush with our antagonists.

We had already, on the 13th, been brought into the saddle by a sudden alarm, but had found, on hastening to the front, that the gallantry and good firing of our pickets had foiled every effort of the Federals to effect a crossing over the Rappahannock. On the following morning, however, we were abruptly startled by a report that the Yankees had forced a passage at several points of the river, had driven our pickets back, and were advancing in large force upon Culpepper. All was hurry and confusion at headquarters on the receipt of this intelligence; tents were struck, horses saddled, waggons loaded and teams harnessed, for an immediate start—the General and his Staff galloping off to throw ourselves, with W. Lee's brigade, across the enemy's path. It was on the plain near Brandy Station—that battle-ground so often mentioned

already—that we once more encountered the advancing foe, and before long the action developed along all our line. The enemy fought with great obstinacy, and at first we had to yield ground to them for some distance; but in the course of the afternoon we succeeded, by a general and united movement in advance, in driving them back across the river. The fighting was only kept up during the evening by an exchange of firing between the Yankee guns mounted on an old redoubt close to the opposite shore and our batteries on two hills, about a mile apart, in the space between which Generals Stuart and Lee, with their respective Staffs, had taken up their position, carelessly stretched on the ground, chatting and laughing and watching the effect of the shells crossing each other over their heads, as unconcerned as if there were no enemy within miles. I myself was posted a little to the right, narrowly observing, by the aid of the excellent glass I had captured from General Pope's baggage, the movements of the enemy, and wondering in my mind how it was a numerous group of officers so close under the Yankee cannons had thus long escaped their attention. Suddenly I saw the officer commanding the Federal battery mount the parapet, and, after scanning the knot of officers through his glass, assist with his own hands in pointing one of the guns upon

them. In spite of my warning, which was received with mockery, the joyous assembly continued their seance till, a few seconds after, the shot was heard, and a shell fell plump in their midst, burying in the earth with itself one of General Lee's gauntlets, which lay on the ground only a few feet from the General himself, and bespattering all who were nearest to it with earth and mud. It was now my turn to laugh as I beheld my gallant comrades stampede right and left from the fatal spot, chasing their frightened horses, followed by a rapid, though happily less well-directed, succession of shots from the enemy's guns. With this little incident closed the fight for that day. A heavy shower now descended, lasting many hours, which, in the absence of the shelter of our tents, left unpitched in the hurry and excitement of the events of the day, caused us to spend a night of wretched discomfort.

General Stuart was led to believe that, the river being much swollen by the rain, the Yankees would leave us undisturbed; but at the very earliest gleam of day, this supposition was dispelled by the intelligence that the enemy, strongly reinforced, had succeeded again in forcing a passage to our side; and once more, wet through and shivering, we were summoned to the front. The conflict, as on so many previous occasions, commenced near Brandy Station;

but, notwithstanding their vastly superior numbers, our adversaries did not make a very obstinate stand, probably owing to the rapid rising of the Rappahannock, which in a few hours more might be rendered impassable. Stuart, desirous on this very account to draw the enemy into a battle, vigorously pushed his troops forward after the retreating foe, but was unable to prevent the safe crossing of the entire cavalry force of the enemy, with the exception of their rear-guard, composed of two squadrons of the 3d Indiana regiment. These we brought to a stand a few hundred yards from a mill-creek which intersects the road at a distance of about half a mile from the river, and generally presents scarcely a foot's depth of water, but which was now swollen to a wide and rapid stream not to be crossed, even at the shallowest points, save with the greatest difficulty. As soon as the head of our column approached this spot, a number of dismounted sharpshooters, posted here to protect the Yankees' rear, opened a severe fire, killing and wounding several of our men. Stuart at once ordered a squadron of our 9th Virginia regiment, who were leading the advance, to charge. Having been refused the General's permission to join in the attack, I galloped, on my own account, about a hundred yards to the right of the road in the direction of the hostile sharpshooters, whose particular attention I at once

engaged, a number of bullets flying round my head unpleasantly quick and near. Having got within about forty yards of their position, I shouted out to them to surrender; but in the fancied security offered by the broad foaming stream, which flowed between them and their assailants, they treated my summons with defiance, and answered it only by a brace of bullets, one of which nearly cut off a lock of my hair. Exasperated out of all patience at this, I spurred my horse and dashed with a tremendous leap into the middle of the creek, and for a moment its waters seemed to close over my head; but quickly surmounting the torrent, my brave horse gallantly swam to the opposite shore, and, by a strenuous effort of every sinew, succeeded in scrambling up the steep bank to the high ground above.

The boldness and rapidity of this feat seemed to perfectly paralyse the objects of my wrath—a corporal and a private of the 3d Indiana Cavalry, who, as I pounced upon them with uplifted sword, threw away their arms and begged for mercy on their knees. In the first excitement, I felt but little inclined to heed their prayers, seeing that but a few minutes before they had shot down one of our men, and had spent their last cartridge in the attempt to do the like for me; but the poor wretches were so terror-stricken, and begged so hard for their lives, that I

was content to commute the penalty of death to treating them with just such a cold bath as I had had; and so I sent them through the water to the other side, where one of our couriers, who had hastened up to my assistance, took them in charge. In the mean time, the fight had ended in our favour. The enemy, after a short but severe combat, had broken in utter confusion, and had been chased by our men across the creek to the river, where a heavy fire from the opposite bank put an end to the pursuit. Some thirty prisoners and horses fell into our hands, and the enemy lost severely besides in killed and wounded—a good number of their men having been unhorsed in the hurried passage of the creek, and whelmed in the angry waves.

Stuart, who had witnessed the whole course of my little exploit, was much amused at the plight in which I returned, soaked through, and beplastered with mud. He had never, he said, expected to see me emerge after my plunge; and added, that as I climbed up the bank I looked like a terrapin crawling out of the mud. For some little time longer the firing was kept up by the artillery on both sides; but as the enemy soon entirely disappeared from the opposite side of the Rappahannock, we returned to our camping ground, pitched our tents, and established once more, in regular order, our cavalry headquarters.

As the continued rains rendered the crossing of the Rappahannock impracticable, an interval of tranquillity succeeded these few days of conflict and excitement. It speeded away, however, rapidly enough, amidst visits in the neighbourhood and pleasant horseback excursions in the company of our lady acquaintances. On the 21st I had an agreeable surprise in a visit from a fellow-countryman, Captain Scheibert, of the Prussian engineers. He had been sent on a mission by his Government to take note as an eyewitness of the operations of the war, and derive what profit he could from its experiences. I had already seen him at General R. E. Lee's headquarters, where he was a guest of the General's, for he had been several weeks with our army, and was now about, at my urgent prayer, to make a further stay with us. My tent and its comforts, sadly curtailed however by the results of the heavy rains, which on several occasions had completely deluged it, were gladly shared with my visitor. Just as at our old headquarters, near Fredericksburg, we had been annoyed by the aggressions of straying sheep, we now suffered from the daily irruptions upon our camp of pigs exploring and devouring everything that fell under their snouts. Not seldom, indeed, these intruders had the impudence to break into my tent in the middle of

the night, having set their fancy on a pair of large cavalry boots of mine, which once or twice they succeeded in dragging off far into the woods, giving my negro Henry and myself infinite trouble before we could recover these precious parts of my accoutrement. Our evenings were mostly passed in the village, in the company of our lady acquaintances, whom Scheibert delighted by his excellent pianoforte-playing, to say nothing of the amusement they derived from his original practice with the idiom and pronunciation of the English language.

On the 28th, Stuart and the members of his Staff, including our visitor, dined by invitation under the roof of an old widow lady, a very particular friend of mine, who resided on a pretty little plantation close to Culpepper. Mrs S. was a poetess, and had exercised her talents to the glorification of Lee and Jackson, so that when, after dinner, she asked permission to read a new poem, we all naturally expected that it was now Stuart's turn. What was my astonishment, however, and embarrassment to find myself the theme of her eloquent and touching verses, wherein my praises were most flatteringly sounded! Blushing, and transfixed to my chair with stupefaction, as I heard the loud applause which greeted the conclusion of the piece, for a moment I was at a loss how to behave; then sud-

denly rousing myself, I advanced towards Mrs S., and in the fashion of the knights of old, I knelt on one knee, and with a kiss mutely impressed my thanks on the hand from which I received my poetical diploma of merit. "That won't do, Von," cried out Stuart, and, stepping forward, he printed a hearty kiss on the old lady's cheek—a liberty which she received with a very good grace, saying, "General, I have always known you to be a very gallant soldier, but from this moment I believe you to be the bravest of the brave." Music, dance, and merriment chased away the remaining hours of the day, and it was late in the night ere we reached our headquarters, and retired to rest, little divining how soon we should be roused up again.

It was about three in the morning when I was awakened by the General himself, who informed me he had just received intelligence that the enemy were approaching the river at several points with a strong force composed of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, and that we must hasten to the front without delay. The words were no sooner spoken than the bugle sounded to horse, and a few minutes after we galloped away from the camp, where all were busy with preparations for moving at a moment's notice. We reached the famous plateau near Brandy Station a little after daybreak, and found there W. Lee's brigade in line

of battle, and two batteries of artillery in position. Fitz Lee's command arrived soon afterwards; and on this spot, so favourable for defence, Stuart decided to await the enemy's advance, making all preparations for a desperate resistance. A dense fog, which clung to the plain, precluded all observation of the hostile movements; but our pickets, which by this time had been forced back from the river and were receding towards us before vastly superior numbers, reported that a large body of troops of all arms had passed over to our side of the Rappahannock, and, to judge from the sounds which reached them, still more were crossing on several pontoon-bridges. In the midst of the anxious suspense in which the morning passed away a prisoner was brought in, who, misled by the fog, had ridden straight into our lines, and as he was led up to us by two of our men, he was vainly trying to make himself understood. Addressing this excited gentleman in French, I found that he was a Belgian artillery officer who, anxious to have the best opportunity possible of witnessing the operations in the field, had attached himself to the Staff of some Yankee General, temporarily adopting the Federal uniform. My new acquaintance very naturally declined to afford us any information as to the enemy's strength and their intentions; but, observing how small comparatively were our numbers, he said, with

a shrug of his shoulders, "Gentlemen, I can only give you one piece of advice—that is, to try and make your escape as quickly as possible; if not, your capture by the large army in front of you is a certainty." I replied, laughing, "That we preferred to wait a little while yet, and that it was our habit always to fight before retreating." Our *brave Belge*, with great earnestness, claimed his neutral privileges, and exhibited a profound disinclination to be sent as a captive to Richmond; but, being taken in full Yankee uniform, no exception could be made in his case, and accordingly he was eventually sent, with other prisoners, to that objectionable locality, there to await his regular exchange.

Hour after hour passed away in this trying state of uncertainty, until at last, towards mid-day, the fog cleared away, and we were enabled to discover that our antagonists had for once completely deceived us. The advance in front had only been made by some cavalry to occupy our attention while the main body had marched in the direction of the Rapidan river. With his accustomed quickness, Stuart divined at once the intentions of the Federal commander, and, leaving one regiment behind to watch the movements of the hostile cavalry, we directed our march with all rapidity towards Stevensburg and Germana Ford on the Rapidan, trusting to be able to throw ourselves

in the way of the enemy before he could reach the latter important point, where our engineers had just been completing a bridge. Unfortunately we were too late; and on reaching the intersection of the road, near the free negro Madden's house, previously mentioned, we found the greater part of the Federal troops had passed already, and could see, at a distance of not more than three hundred yards, the dense masses of their rear-guard marching steadily along. To give the Yankees an idea how close we were on their track, Stuart ordered the attack at once, and our dismounted sharpshooters, advancing through the undergrowth, opened fire simultaneously with our artillery, advantage being taken by the latter of several openings in the forest to throw a shower of shell and canister into their closely serried ranks. The confusion and consternation caused amongst them by this unexpected attack passes all description. In utter helpless stampede they pressed forward in double-quick, completely heedless of the efforts of their officers to make them stand and fight, and animated by the one sole object of escaping from the deadly fire, which again and again plunged into the hostile columns until the last man had disappeared. The road was covered with their dead and wounded, and sixty who had straggled off into the woods were taken prisoners.

We learned from these prisoners that the force consisted of three *corps d'armée*—the 5th, 11th, and 12th; that their destination was Germana Ford and Chancellorsville; and that their cavalry, under General Stoneman's command, was to march towards Culpepper Court-house. In accordance with this information General Stuart resolved to leave William Lee's brigade behind to impede as much as possible Stoneman's advance, and with Fitz Lee's command to fall again upon the enemy's flank. By the time we reached Racoon's Ford it was already dark, and after crossing the river we dismounted here for an hour to feed our horses. The night was wet and chilly, a fine sleet drizzling down incessantly; and we felt cold, hungry, and uncomfortable, when, after a short rest, we rode on again through the darkness. We were marching along the plank-road, which, coming from Orange Court-house, strikes across that leading from Germana to Chancellorsville, at a small village called the Wilderness, when at that point the Federal army, already in motion, came in sight. The day being just breaking we attacked without delay; but found this time the Federals better prepared, several of their infantry regiments forming at once into line of battle, and their artillery most effectively answering the fire of our battery. After a short but severe contest we had to retire; but, striking into a road

parallel with the enemy's line of march, we renewed the conflict, whenever a favourable opportunity seemed to present itself, until late in the evening, when General Stuart gave the order to turn off in the direction of Spotsylvania Court-house and go into bivouac about eight miles hence, at a place called Tod's Tavern.

We reached this point about nightfall, and here General Stuart decided to leave the regiment behind, and, accompanied only by myself, some members of the Staff, whom Captain Scheibert volunteered to join, and a few couriers, to ride across through the woods to General R. E. Lee's headquarters, which, as the crow flies, were about twelve miles distant. Knowing we should have to pass quite close to the enemy's lines, I endeavoured to persuade the General to take one of our squadrons along with him as an escort, but the General refused, believing the road to be quite clear; so, by way of precaution, I sent a courier on ahead to serve as a kind of advanced-guard. We had been riding for some time silently through the forest, whose darkness was only relieved by occasional glimpses of the new moon, when suddenly a pistol-shot was heard a few hundred yards ahead of us, and presently the courier hurried back to us, reporting, in the most excited manner, that he had been fired at by a Yankee cavalry picket sta-

tioned only a short distance from us in the road. Stuart, perfectly convinced that the courier was deceived, and had taken some of our own men for the enemy, requested me to ride ahead and investigate the matter.

Accompanied by Major Terril of our Staff, I pricked forward and soon discovered a body of thirty horsemen before us, who in their light-blue overcoats, just discernible by the feeble light of the moon, looked most decidedly like Federals. To make quite sure, however, we approached to within about fifty yards, and I then called out and asked them to what regiment they belonged. "You shall see that soon enough, you d—d rebels," was the answer, and at the same moment the whole party came full gallop towards us. Firing our revolvers at the charging foe, we quickly turned our horses' heads and rode as fast as our steeds would carry us to the rear, followed by our pursuers shouting and firing after us to their hearts' content. Resistance when so completely outnumbered would have been folly; and accordingly I had the pleasure of seeing our General, who had now lost all doubts as to the real character of these cavalrymen, for once run from the enemy. The Yankees soon slackened their pace, however, and at last gave up the chase altogether, when we halted, and General Stuart despatched Captain White of our

Staff to Fitz Lee, with the order to send on one of his regiments as quickly as possible, and to follow slowly himself with the remainder of his brigade. After an anxious half-hour the regiment came up, and we had the satisfaction of turning the tables on our pursuers and driving them before us as rapidly as we had fled before them. The feeble light of the moon was now nearly extinguished by the clouds scudding rapidly across the sky. General Stuart and his Staff were trotting along at the head of the column, when, at the moment of emerging out of the dark forest, we suddenly discovered in the open field before us, and at a distance of not more than 160 yards, the long lines of several regiments of hostile cavalry, who received us with a severe fire, which, concentrated on the narrow road, in a few moments killed and wounded a large number of our men and horses, causing considerable confusion in our ranks, and speedily checking our onward movement. Fully conscious of our critical position, Stuart drew his sword, and, raising his clear ringing voice, gave the order to attack, taking the lead himself. For once our horsemen refused to follow their gallant commander; they wavered under the thick storm of bullets; soon all discipline ceased, and in a few minutes the greater part of this splendid regiment, which had distinguished itself in so many battle-

fields, broke to the rear in utter confusion. In vain did the General, myself, and the other members of the Staff, do our utmost to restore order; we only succeeded in rallying about thirty men round us.

At this moment the enemy's bugle sounded the charge; and a few seconds after we brunted the shock of the attack, which broke upon us like a thunder-cloud, and bore our little band along with its vehement rush as driven by a mighty wave, sweeping us along with it into the darkness of the forest. And now ensued a wild, exciting chase, in which friend and foe, unable to recognise each other, mingled helter-skelter in one furious ride. I cannot describe the sensation that came over me, as, feeling assured that everything was now lost, I tightly grasped the hilt of my sword, resolved to sell my life as dearly as possible. Relying merely on the instinct of their horses, most of the men followed the straight road by which we had come, but I and a number of others turned off into a small by-road to the left. Here I discovered by the gleams of the moonlight, which now broke out more brightly, that those immediately round me were friends, but every effort to stop and rally them was in vain. "The Yankees are close behind; we must run for our lives," was all the answer I received to my appeals; and on went the hopeless stampede more furiously than before. A

tremendous fence standing across our path, too high for a leap, and only to be pulled down at the risk of dismounting, seemed likely to bring our wild retreat to a stop; but by dint of rider pressing on rider, and horse plunging against horse, it at last yielded to the accumulated weight of the impetuous horsemen, and broke down with a loud crash, leaving the way open to the disorderly flight. Just as, at the end of a rapid ride of more than an hour through dense forest, I reached an open field, a rider, who had been close at my side for some time, startled me with the exclamation, "Von, is that you?" in tones which, to my intense delight and relief, I recognised to be Stuart's, who had followed the same route as myself.

We were soon joined by some other members of our Staff, all of whom had had wonderful escapes; and by our united efforts we at last succeeded in rallying some sixty of our men, whom we put in charge of one of their officers, with orders to wait for further instructions. Meanwhile we set off with the project of rejoining the rest of the brigade, which, in a dark night and through an unknown and forest-covered country, was a task of some difficulty. On our road we fell in with several of our former pursuers, who, being bewildered in the vast forest, now surrendered to us with little hesitation; two of these were captured by Stuart himself. At the end of an hour's

tedious ride we came upon Fitz Lee's column trotting onward to the field of action, whither the 2d Virginia had already preceded them. On reaching the scene of our recent defeat, we found that our brave fellows of the 2d, led by their gallant colonel, Munford, had come up just in time to protect their flying comrades, and had thrown themselves with such ardour on the Federals as to break their lines and scatter them in every direction, many killed and wounded being left on the field, and some eighty prisoners and horses falling into our hands.

As all seemed now over, Stuart ordered the troops to march on to Spotsylvania Court-house, and there encamp, the 2d Virginia taking the lead, and the prisoners and remaining regiments following. We were quietly marching along with the advanced-guard, chatting over the incidents of the evening, when several shots suddenly sounded on our left, followed by brisk firing in our rear. Immediately cries of "The Yankees are on us!" "The Yankees are charging!" broke out from our column; sabres flew out of their scabbards, revolvers from their holsters, and everybody seemed on fire to oppose the enemy, without exactly knowing in what direction to look for him. The scene of confusion which ensued is not to be described; firearms exploded in all directions, bullets traversed the air from all quarters;

and, for want of a visible foe, friend seemed likely to come into collision with friend. General Stuart and several others, including myself, did our utmost to quell the disorder, but our voices were drowned in the general hubbub. Suddenly a fresh cry of "Here are the Yankees; here they come," broke out from the men around me as they fired off their revolvers into the bushes to the right. Calling on them to follow, I spurred my horse forward in the same direction, when, at the same moment, I was met by a rider galloping towards me, who levelled a shot at me so close, the bullet passing through my hat, that I was completely blinded. Before I had quite recovered and could deliver my thrust, my adversary lost no time in firing his second shot, which entered the head of my brave bay, and stretched us both on the ground, myself under the horse. Luckily, however, I was able to disengage myself from the superincumbent weight of the dying animal; and, jumping up to look after my assailant, found that, fortunately for me, he had disappeared, without waiting to take advantage of my prostrate condition.

Nevertheless my position was a ticklish one still; the firing continued in all directions round me, and our men were galloping about in wild excitement, some calling on me to save myself, as the woods were full of Federals. As I did not much fancy

leaving my saddle and bridle a spoil to the enemy, I had managed to detach the precious articles from my dead steed, when one of our couriers rode up to me, leading a Yankee horse which he had caught for me as it was running about riderless. It was an odd-looking, stumpy-legged little pony; and when mounted on it, my legs dangling nearly to the ground, my large English hunting-saddle covering the pony's neck, and leaving his ears only sticking out, I must have presented a remarkable figure, especially as the little beast was in such a state of excitement, plunging and snorting wildly, that I had some trouble in keeping my seat. At last, with no little difficulty, I succeeded in finding Stuart again, who, in the midst of his ill-humour and dissatisfaction at the behaviour of his men, was unable to resist the ludicrous effect of my appearance. He now told me that discipline and order had at last been re-established, and that the whole rout had been caused by less than a hundred of the enemy's cavalry dispersed in the woods by the charge of the 2d Virginia, and who, in the darkness, had been taken for a much larger force. He added that our men had mistaken each other for enemies; and that two of our regiments, the 1st and 3d Virginia, under this mutual delusion, had charged through each other in a splendid attack before they discovered their error,

which was fortunately attended with no worse consequences than a few sabre-cuts. All this was a lesson how dangerous night-attacks always are, and taught me that, whenever possible, they should be avoided.

Our regiments having been collected, and our prisoners brought together again, we continued our march to Spotsylvania, which we reached without further interruption at about two in the morning, and our brigade went into bivouac. I here exchanged my pony for another of the captured horses, and rode on, with the untiring Stuart, eight miles further in the direction of Fredericksburg, to General R. E. Lee's headquarters, where we arrived just at daybreak, and I was enabled to snatch an hour's rest and tranquillity after all the excitement and fatigue of the night. Our accidental encounter with the enemy turned out of the utmost importance in its consequences, as the cavalry force with which we came into collision was, in fact, the advanced-guard of a much larger force sent by the Federals to destroy our railway communications—an enterprise which, after this partial defeat, they abandoned altogether. The main body of the Federal army, numbering about 100,000 men, had in the meanwhile centred in the neighbourhood of Chancellorsville, the three corps coming from the Rapidan having united with

those which had crossed the Rappahannock at United States and Banks Ford. A strong force still remained opposite Fredericksburg, watched on our side by Early's division. The bulk of our army confronted the enemy in line of battle, almost perpendicularly to the Rappahannock — Anderson's and M'Laws's divisions of Longstreet's corps forming the right, Jackson's corps the left wing, our whole numbers amounting to about 50,000 men.

* General Longstreet himself, with Picket's and Hood's divisions, had some time since been detailed to North Carolina, where he was operating against a Federal army in the neighbourhood of Suffolk.

CHAPTER XXI.

FIGHT NEAR THE FURNACE—NARROW ESCAPE OF JACKSON AND STUART—JACKSON'S FLANK MARCH—FIRST BATTLE OF THE WILDERNESS, 2D MAY 1863.

AFTER doing a large amount of sleep in a very short time, we started again, considerably refreshed, for Spotsylvania Court-house, to join our cavalry there, and take up our position on Jackson's left. Towards eight o'clock, our entire army commenced a forward movement on the enemy, who had only a few isolated detachments posted in our immediate front. With these a few lively skirmishes occurred, as we encountered them in succession, and drove them gradually before us upon the main body of their troops. For many miles round the country was covered with dense forest, with only occasional patches of open space, so that we made but slow progress, and in many places our cavalry and artillery had to surmount considerable difficulties in their advance. At about four o'clock we reached a place called "The Furnace," from some productive iron-works formerly

established there; and having received an intimation from our advanced-guard that a strong body of the enemy's infantry were occupying a position about half a mile further on, immediately across our road, drawn up in line of battle to oppose our advance, Stuart at once ordered the 1st regiment of cavalry to charge. So heavy a fire met our brave fellows, however, and they were so impeded by the nature of the ground, utterly unfit for cavalry operations, that they returned about as quickly as they had started, and we had to remain stationary, awaiting reinforcements from Jackson's infantry. A Georgia brigade soon came up, and, after a short but severe contest, we succeeded in driving the enemy back some distance, till they came under the protection of numerous batteries of their artillery, posted on a ridge of hills, and whose fire thundered down with such fearful effect as to check all further progress. Just at this moment Jackson galloped up, and begged Stuart to ride forward with him in order to reconnoitre the enemy's lines, and find out a point from which the enemy's artillery might be enfiladed.

A small bridle-path branching forth from the main road to the right conducted to a height about half a mile distant; and as this seemed a favourable point for their object, both Generals, accompanied by their Staffs, made for it, followed by six pieces of our horse-

artillery. On reaching the spot, so dense was the undergrowth, it was found impossible to find enough clear space to bring more than one gun at a time into position; the others closed up immediately behind, and the whole body of us completely blocked up the narrow road. Scarcely had the smoke of our first shot cleared away when a couple of masked batteries suddenly opened upon us at short range, and enveloped us in a complete storm of shell and canister, which, concentrated on so narrow a space, did fearful execution among our party, men and horses falling right and left, the animals kicking and plunging wildly, and everybody eager to disentangle himself from the confusion and get out of harm's way. Jackson, as soon as he had found out his mistake, ordered the guns to retire; but the confined space so protracted the operation of turning, that the enemy's cannon had full time to continue its havoc to a most fearful extent, covering the road with dead and wounded.

That Jackson and Stuart with their officers escaped was nothing short of miraculous, the only exception being Major Channing Price of our Staff, who was struck a few paces from me by a piece of shell. Poor fellow! imagining that, as no bone was broken, the wound was not dangerous, he remained at his post till he fainted in his saddle from the loss of blood,

and had to be carried to a plantation about a mile in our rear. The firing now gradually slackened, and soon ceased altogether as darkness came on. As there was nothing more to be done for the present on our side, and the enemy showed no intention of continuing the fight, Jackson gave orders for the troops to fall back a short distance and go into bivouac. The position of our encampment being quite close to the house whither our wounded comrade had been conveyed, General Stuart accompanied us thither to look after his comforts and nurse him during the night. Sad was the intelligence that awaited us; poor Price was dying. The fragment of shell had severed a principal artery, and, the bleeding not having been stopped in time, he was rapidly and hopelessly sinking. It was a cruel spectacle to see the gallant young fellow stretched on his deathbed surrounded by his sorrowing friends, just able to recognise them and answer the pressure of their hands as a last farewell. His own brother, who had joined us but a few months before, leant over him to the last, watching in silent agony the pitiless progress of death. About midnight our dear friend breathed his last, and General Stuart advised us to seek some rest against the work of the ensuing day, but no sleep could I find. My heart full of grief, and my thoughts busy with memories of the departed and of his family at

Richmond, who had become dear friends of mine, I wandered about all through that mild night of May, until the sounding bugle and the rolling drums roused me from my reveries, to summon me to new scenes of death and destruction.

All was bustle and activity as I galloped along the lines, on the morning of the 2d, to obtain, according to Stuart's orders, the latest instructions for our cavalry from General Lee, who was located at a distance of some miles to our right. Anderson's and M'Laws's sharpshooters were advancing, and already exchanging shots with the enemy's skirmishers —the line of battle of these two divisions having been partially extended over the space previously occupied by Jackson's corps, that they might cover its movements. This splendid corps, meanwhile, was marching in close columns in a direction which set us all wondering what could be the intentions of old Stonewall; but as we beheld him riding along, heading the troops himself, we should as soon have thought of questioning the sagacity of our admired chief, as of hesitating to follow him blindly wherever he should lead. The orders to the cavalry were to report to Jackson, and to form his advanced-guard; and in that capacity we marched silently along through the forest, taking a small by-road, which brought us several times so near the enemy's

lines that the stroke of axes, mingled with the hum of voices from their camps, was distinctly audible.

Thus commenced the famous flank march which, more than any other operation of the war, proved the brilliant strategical talents of General Lee, and the consummate ability of his lieutenant. About two o'clock a body of Federal cavalry came in sight, making, however, but slight show of resistance, and falling back slowly before us. By about four o'clock we had completed our movement without encountering any material obstacle, and reached a patch of wood in rear of the enemy's right wing, formed by the 11th corps, Howard's, which was encamped in a large open field not more than half a mile distant. Halting here, the cavalry threw forward a body of skirmishers to occupy the enemy's attention, while the divisions of Jackson's corps, A. P. Hill's, Colston's, and Rodes's, numbering in all about 28,000 men, moved into line of battle as fast as they arrived. Ordered to reconnoitre the position of the Federals, I rode cautiously forward through the forest, and reached a point whence I obtained a capital view of the greater part of their troops, whose attitude betokened how totally remote was any suspicion that a numerous host was so near at hand.

It was evident that the whole movement we had thus so successfully executed was regarded as merely an unimportant cavalry raid, for only a few squadrons were drawn up in line to oppose us, and a battery of four guns was placed in a position to command the plank-road from Germana, over which we had been marching for the last two hours. The main body of the troops were listlessly reposing, while some regiments were looking on, drawn up on dress parade; artillery horses were quietly grazing at some distance from their guns, and the whole scene presented a picture of the most perfect heedlessness and *nonchalance*, compatible only with utter unconsciousness of impending danger. While complacently gazing on this extraordinary spectacle, somewhat touched myself apparently with the spell of listless incaution in which our antagonists were locked, I was startled by the sound of closely approaching footsteps, and turning in their direction beheld a patrol of six or eight of the enemy's infantry just breaking through the bushes, and gazing at me with most unmistakable astonishment. I had no time to lose here, that was quite certain; so, quickly tugging my horse's head round in the direction of my line of retreat, and digging my spurs into his sides, I dashed off from before the bewildered Yankees, and was out of sight ere they had time to

take steady aim, the bullets that came whizzing after me flying far wide of the mark.

On my return to the spot where I had left Stuart, I found him, with Jackson and the officers of their respective Staffs, stretched out along the grass beneath a gigantic oak, and tranquilly discussing their plans for the impending battle, which both seemed confidently to regard as likely to end in a great and important victory for our arms. Towards five o'clock Jackson's adjutant, Major Pendleton, galloped up to us and reported that the line of battle was formed, and all was in readiness for immediate attack. Accordingly the order was at once given for the whole corps to advance. All hastened forthwith to their appointed posts—General Stuart and his Staff joining the cavalry, which was to operate on the left of our infantry. Scarcely had we got up to our men when the Confederate yell, which always preceded a charge, burst forth along our lines, and Jackson's veterans, who had been with difficulty held back till that moment, bounded forward towards the astounded and perfectly paralysed enemy, while the thunder of our horse-artillery, on whom devolved the honour of opening the ball, reached us from the other extremity of the line. The more hotly we sought to hasten to the front, the more obstinately did we get entangled in the undergrowth,

while our infantry moved on so rapidly that the Federals were already completely routed by the time we had got thoroughly quit of the forest.

It was a strange spectacle that now greeted us. The whole of the 11th corps had broken at the first shock of the attack; entire regiments had thrown down their arms, which were lying in regular lines on the ground, as if for inspection; suppers just prepared had been abandoned; tents, baggage, waggons, cannons, half-slaughtered oxen, covered the foreground in chaotic confusion, while in the background a host of many thousand Yankees were discerned scampering for their lives as fast as their limbs could carry them, closely followed by our men, who were taking prisoners by the hundreds, and scarcely firing a shot. The broken nature of the ground was against all cavalry operations, and though we pushed forward with all our will, it was with difficulty we could keep up with Jackson's "Foot-cavalry," as this famous infantry was often called. Meanwhile a large part of the Federal army, roused by the firing and the alarming reports from the rear, hastened to the field of action, and exerted themselves in vain to arrest the disgraceful rout of their comrades of the 11th corps. Numerous batteries having now joined the conflict, a terrific cannonade roared along the lines, and the fury of the battle was soon at its full height. Towards

dark a sudden pause ensued in the conflict, occasioned by Jackson giving orders for his lines to reform for the continuation of the combat, the rapid and prolonged pursuit of the enemy having thrown them into considerable disorder. Old Stonewall being thoroughly impressed with the conviction that in a few hours the enemy's whole forces would be defeated, and that their principal line of retreat would be in the direction of Ely's Ford, Stuart was ordered to proceed at once towards that point with a portion of his cavalry, in order to barricade the road, and as much as possible impede the retrograde movement of the enemy.

In this operation we were to be joined by a North Carolina infantry regiment, which was already on its way towards the river. Leaving the greater part of the brigade behind us under Fitz Lee's command, we took only the 1st Virginia Cavalry with us, and, trotting rapidly along a small by-path, overtook the infantry about two miles from the ford. Riding with Stuart a little ahead of our men, I suddenly discovered, on reaching the summit of a slight rise in the road, a large encampment in the valley to our left, not more than a quarter of a mile from where we stood, and further still, on the opposite side of the river, more camp-fires were visible, indicating the presence of a large body of troops. Calling a halt,

the General and I rode cautiously forward to reconnoitre the enemy a little more closely, and we managed to approach near enough to hear distinctly the voices and distinguish the figures of the men sitting round their fires, or strolling through the camp. The unexpected presence of so large a body of the enemy immediately in our path entirely disconcerted our previous arrangements. Nevertheless Stuart determined on giving them a slight surprise and disturbing their comfort by a few volleys from our infantry. Just as the regiment, mustering about a thousand, had formed into line according to orders, and was prepared to advance on the enemy, two officers of General A. P. Hill's Staff rode up in great haste and excitement, and communicated something in a low tone to General Stuart, by which he seemed greatly startled and affected. "Take command of that regiment, and act on your own responsibility," were his whispered injunctions to me, as he immediately rode off, followed by the other officers and the cavalry at their topmost speed.

The thunder of the cannon, which for the last hour had increased in loudness, announced that Jackson had recommenced the battle, but as to the course or actual position of affairs I had not an iota of information; and my anxiety being moreover increased by the suddenness of Stuart's departure on some

unknown emergency, I felt rather awkwardly situated. Here was I in the darkness of the night, in an unknown and thickly-wooded country, some six miles from our main army, and opposite to a far superior force, whom I was expected to attack with troops whom I had never before commanded, and to whom I was scarcely known. I felt, however, that there was no alternative but blind obedience, so I advanced with the regiment to within about fifty yards of the enemy's encampment, and gave the command to fire. A hail of bullets rattled through the forest, and as volley after volley was fired, the confusion and dismay occasioned in the camp was indescribable. Soldiers and officers could be plainly seen by the light of the fires rushing helplessly about, horses were galloping wildly in all directions, and the sound of bugles and drums mingled with the cries of the wounded and flying, who sought in the distant woods a shelter against the murderous fire of their unseen enemy. The troops whom we thus dispersed and put to flight consisted, as I was afterwards informed, of the greater part of Averil's cavalry division; and a great number of the men of this command were so panic-stricken, that they did not consider themselves safe until they had reached the opposite shore of the Rapidan, when they straggled off for miles all through Culpepper County.

Our firing had been kept up for about half an hour, and had by this time stirred up alarm in the camps on the other side of the river, the troops of which were marching on us from various directions. Accordingly, I gave orders to my North Carolinians to retire, leaving the task of bringing his command back to the colonel, while, anxious to rejoin Stuart as soon as possible, I galloped on ahead through the dark forest, whose solemn silence was only broken by the melancholy cry of hosts of whip-poor-wills. The firing had now ceased altogether, and all fighting seemed to have been entirely given up, which greatly increased my misgivings. After a tedious ride for nearly an hour over the field of battle, still covered with hundreds of wounded, groaning in their agony, I at last discovered Stuart seated under a solitary plum-tree, busily writing despatches by the dim light of a lantern. From General Stuart I now received the first information of the heavy calamity which had befallen us by the wounding of Jackson. After having instructed his men to fire at everything approaching from the direction of the enemy, in his eagerness to reconnoitre the position of the Federals, and entirely forgetting his own orders, he had been riding with his staff-officers outside our pickets, when on their return, being mistaken for the enemy, the little party were received

by a South Carolina regiment with a volley which killed or wounded nearly every man of them, and laid low our beloved Stonewall himself. The Federals advancing at the same time, a severe skirmish ensued, in the course of which one of the bearers of the litter on which the General was being carried was killed, and Jackson fell heavily to the ground, receiving soon afterwards a second wound. For a few minutes, in fact, the General was in the hands of the enemy; but his men, becoming aware of his perilous position, rushed forward, and speedily driving back the advancing foe, carried their wounded commander to the rear.

A. P. Hill, the next in rank, having, soon after this, been likewise disabled, Stuart had been sent for to take the command of Jackson's corps; but meantime the golden opportunity had slipped by, the enemy had been strongly reinforced, and the renewal of the battle was necessarily postponed until the following morning. Stuart's position was one of undoubted difficulty, his knowledge of the position of the troops being, from the suddenness with which he was called to assume the chief command, naturally imperfect, and most of Jackson's Staff were disabled, or were in attendance on their wounded chief. Of his own Staff, only myself and one or two others happened to be present, but we pledged ourselves to

exert all our energies, and strain every nerve in aid of our General, and in the discharge of our duty. General Stuart informed me that the attack was to be renewed at the earliest dawn of day; and as that hour was now rapidly approaching, I discarded all idea of sleep, and sat up the rest of the night with poor Lieutenant Hullingham of our Staff, who had been wounded in the shoulder late in the evening, and was suffering intense pain.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE BATTLE OF CHANCELLORSVILLE AND CONSEQUENT EVENTS, MAY 3 TO 6.

THE dawn of this memorable Sunday—destined, as by a strange series of coincidences had been so many others, to be a day of fighting instead of rest and prayer—was just streaking the sky, when I was sent by Stuart to order the skirmishers to advance; our three divisions, numbering still about 28,000 men, having in the mean time formed in line of battle *en échelon* across the Germana plank-road—A. P. Hill's in the first line, Colston's in the second, and Rodes's in the third. The bulk of the artillery and cavalry were placed in reserve, the nature of the ground at the commencement of the engagement not admitting the employment of more than a certain number of light batteries acting in concert with the infantry. General Lee, with Anderson's and M'Laws's divisions, pressed on the enemy from the Fredericksburg side, and was engaged in quite a dis-

tinct battle until towards the end of the conflict, when his extreme left joined our right, and the whole of our army operated in one united movement. The enemy, fully three times our number, occupied a piece of wood extending about two miles from our immediate front towards the plateau and open fields round Chancellorsville, a village consisting of only a few houses. The Federals had made good use of their time, having thrown up in the wood during the night three successive lines of breastworks, constructed of strong timber, and on the plateau itself, occupied by their reserves, had erected a regular line of redoubts, mounted by their numerous artillery, forty pieces of which were playing on the narrow plank-road. This plateau of Chancellorsville rises abruptly about three hundred yards from the skirts of the forest, and is bordered by a creek with swampy borders, forming a strong natural work of defence. Notwithstanding the fearful odds arrayed against us, the many disadvantages under which we were labouring, and the fatigues of the last few days, during which scarcely any rations had been given out, our men were in excellent spirits, and confident of success. The sharpshooters advanced rapidly through the dense undergrowth, and were soon engaged in a lively skirmish with the tirailleurs of the enemy, whom they speedily drove to the first line of their intrench-

ments, where a well-directed fire checked the pursuers.

All our divisions now moving forward, the battle soon became general, and the musketry sounded in one continued roll along the lines. Nearly a hundred hostile guns opening fire at the same time, the forest seemed alive with shot, shell, and bullets, and the plank-road, upon which, as was before mentioned, the fire of forty pieces was concentrated, was soon enveloped in a cloud of smoke from the bursting of shells and the explosion of caissons. This road being our principal line of communication, and crowded therefore with ambulances, ammunition-trains, and artillery, the loss of life soon became fearful, and dead and dying men and animals were strewing every part of it. How General Stuart, and those few staff-officers with him who had to gallop to and fro so frequently through this *feu infernal*, escaped unhurt, seems to me quite miraculous. Several of our couriers were wounded; one had a leg torn from his body by a cannon-ball while I was in the act of giving him some directions, and died soon afterwards. General Stuart had a horse killed under him in the first half-hour of the fight, and my own was twice wounded, first in the back by a musket-ball, and next in the chest by a piece of shell, from the effects of which it died the following morn-

ing, though it was fortunately able to carry me through the day. Stuart was all activity, and wherever the danger was greatest there was he to be found, urging the men forward, and animating them by the force of his example. The shower of missiles that hissed through the air passed round him unheeded; and in the midst of the hottest fire I heard him, to an old melody, hum the words, "Old Joe Hooker get out of the Wilderness."

After a raging conflict, protracted for several hours, during which the tide of battle ebbed and flowed on either side, we succeeded in taking the advanced works, and driving the enemy upon their third line of intrenchments, of a still stronger character than those before it. This partial success was only gained with a sad sacrifice of life, while countless numbers were seen limping and crawling to the rear. The woods had caught fire in several places from the explosion of shells—the flames spreading principally, however, over a space of several acres in extent where the ground was thickly covered with dry leaves; and here the conflagration progressed with the rapidity of a prairie-fire, and a large number of Confederate and Federal wounded thickly scattered in the vicinity, and too badly hurt to crawl out of the way, met a terrible death. The heartrending cries of the poor victims, as the flames advanced,

entreating to be rescued from their impending fate—entreaties which it was impossible to heed in the crisis of the battle, and amidst duties on which the lives of many others depended—seem still in my ears. Among the heart-sickening scenes of this terrible conflict which are still vivid in my memory, is one no lapse of time can ever efface, and in contemplating which I scarcely could check the tears from starting to my eyes. Riding to the front, I was hailed by a young soldier, whose boyish looks and merry songs on the march had frequently attracted my attention and excited my interest, and who was now leaning against a tree, the life-blood streaming down his side from a mortal wound, and his face white with the pallor of approaching death. "Major," said the poor lad, "I am dying, and I shall never see my regiment again; but I ask you to tell my comrades that the Yankees have killed but not conquered me." When I passed the place again half an hour afterwards I found him a corpse. Such was the universal spirit of our men, and in this lay the secret of many of our wonderful achievements.

The enemy had in the meanwhile been strongly reinforced, and now poured forth from their third line of intrenchments a fire so terrible upon our advancing troops that the first two divisions staggered, and, after several unsuccessful efforts to press on-

ward, fell back in considerable confusion. In vain was it that our officers used every effort to bring them forward once more; in vain even was it that Stuart, snatching the battle-flag of one of our brigades from the hands of the colour-bearer and waving it over his head, called on them as he rode forward to follow him. Nothing could induce them again to face that tempest of bullets, and that devastating hurricane of grape and canister vomited at close range from more than sixty pieces of artillery, and the advantages so dearly gained seemed about to be lost. At this critical moment, we suddenly heard the yell of Rodes's division behind us, and saw these gallant troops, led by their heroic general, charge over the front lines, and fall upon the enemy with such impetus that in a few minutes their works were taken, and they were driven in rapid flight from the woods to their redoubts on the hills of Chancellorsville.

A slight pause now intervened in the conflict, both sides, after the terrible work of the last few hours, being equally willing to draw breath awhile; and this gave us an opportunity to re-form our lines and close up our decimated ranks. The contest, meanwhile, was sustained by the artillery alone, which kept up a heavy cannonade; and the nature of the ground being now more favourable, most of our batteries had been brought into action, while from a hill on our

extreme right, which had only been abandoned by the enemy after the charge of Rodes's division, twenty 12-pounder Napoleons played with a well-directed flank-fire upon the enemy's works, producing a terrible effect upon their dense masses. About half-past ten we had news from General Lee, informing us that, having been pressing steadily forward the entire morning, he had now, with Anderson's and M'Laws's divisions, reached our right wing. I was at once despatched by Stuart to the Commander-in-Chief to report the state of affairs, and obtain his orders for further proceedings. I found him with our twenty-gun battery, looking as calm and dignified as ever, and perfectly regardless of the shells bursting round him, and the solid shot ploughing up the ground in all directions. General Lee expressed himself much satisfied with our operations, and intrusted me with orders for Stuart, directing a general attack with his whole force, which was to be supported by a charge of Anderson's division on the left flank of the enemy. With renewed courage and confidence our three divisions now moved forward upon the enemy's strong position on the hills, encountering, as we emerged from the forest into the open opposite the plateau of Chancellorsville, such a storm of canister and bullets, that for a while it seemed an impossibility to take the heights in the face of it. Suddenly we heard to

our right, piercing the roar and tumult of the battle, the yell of Anderson's men, whom we presently beheld hurled forward in a brilliant charge, sweeping everything before them. Short work was now made of the Federals, who, in a few minutes, were driven from their redoubts, which they abandoned in disorderly flight, leaving behind them cannons, small-arms, tents, and baggage in large quantities, besides a host of prisoners, of whom we took 360 in one redoubt.

A more magnificent spectacle can hardly be imagined than that which greeted me when I reached the crest of the plateau, and beheld on this side the long lines of our swiftly advancing troops stretching as far as the eye could reach, their red flags fluttering in the breeze, and their arms glittering in the morning sun; and farther on, dense and huddled masses of the Federals flying in utter rout towards the United States Ford, whilst high over our heads flew the shells which our artillery were dropping amidst the crowd of the retreating foe. The Chancellorsville House had caught fire, and was now enveloped in flames, so that it was with difficulty that we could save some portion of the Federal wounded lying there, to the number of several hundreds, the majority of whom perished. In this building General Hooker had fixed his headquarters, and hence he had

directed the battle, until a shell, striking the roof of the porch within which he stood, brought down such an overwhelming heap of plaster and stones upon his head, that he was taken up from the ground insensible, and for more than an hour was unable to attend to his duties. The flight and pursuit took the direction of United States Ford, as far as about a mile beyond Chancellorsville, where another strong line of intrenchments offered their protection to the fugitives, and heavy reserves of fresh troops opposed our further advance.

Eight hours of severe fighting had now considerably exhausted our troops, and General Lee, having sent me off at about 11 o'clock A.M. to recall the advanced division, ordered the whole army to halt and rest for the present. The next few hours passed away in comparative quietude, interrupted only at intervals by cannonading, or the more brisk firing of the skirmishers, and it soon became evident that the battle would not be renewed that day. Our men had in the mean time occupied themselves throwing up a line of intrenchments along the plank-road, as a protection against a sudden rush of the enemy, and were now some of them engaged in tending the wounded and burying our dead, while others were busying themselves cooking the rations left behind them in abundance by the Federals. I was myself suffering

severely from hunger, having eaten little or nothing for several days, and coming upon an apparently well-stored haversack fastened on the back of one of the disfigured corpses on the field, I was held back by no morbid loathings from helping myself to its contents, and enjoyed a hearty meal off the dead Yankee's provisions—a thing which not many months before would have seemed to me impossible. Even my negro Henry was affected with more squeamishness, for I soon afterwards met him, after he had been collecting a heap of plunder, which so loaded my poor mule Kitt as to leave only her legs visible, standing wistfully beside a fine pair of boots upon a dead Yankee's feet, and eyeing them, with his finger in his mouth, and a most melancholy expression of regret and longing on his black visage. Knowing how much the fellow was really in want of such articles, I advised him to possess himself of them before some one else was beforehand with him, when he whined out, "Oh! I like so much to have them boots, but I can't; I'se afraid de ghost of dis 'ere Yankee come in de night and take dem dar boots back agin." And nothing could persuade this generally enterprising darkey from despoiling the dead, although he would have had little hesitation in cutting a living man's throat for the sake of the same alluring prize.

In the course of the afternoon a heavy cannonade came booming over to us from Fredericksburg, and early in the evening it was reported to General Lee that, after a sanguinary conflict, our troops, yielding to far superior numbers, had been driven from the heights opposite that town, and the hostile forces were pressing forward in the direction of Chancellorsville. This startling intelligence, rendering our position now a very precarious one, was received by our Commander-in-Chief with a quietude, and an absence of all emotion, which I could not but intensely admire. Referring, with the utmost calmness, to Sedgwick's advance, he quietly made his dispositions, ordering M'Laws's division to march to the support of Early, who had been retreating to Salem Church—a place about five miles from Fredericksburg. By this firm and tranquil demeanour did General Lee inspire confidence and sanguine hope of success in all around him. Notwithstanding our extreme fatigue, the whole of the latter part of the evening we were busy carrying water to the wounded, hundreds of whom still lay in the field, it being impossible to convey so large a number to the hospitals before night. Nor did we cease our merciful task till after darkness had set in, when we returned to the centre of the plateau, where in the mean time Stuart had temporarily established his headquarters.

Here we found General Lee and Stuart seated by a small bivouac-fire discussing the day's events, and speculating on the chances of a continuation of the battle; and here, too, I found my Prussian friend, Captain Scheibert, greatly elated over an adventure he had met with in the early part of the day, his original way of recounting which greatly amused us all.

He had been riding my black horse, for which he had a particular affection; and in the hope of procuring provender for it, which it much needed—perhaps, too, actuated by like intentions on his own account—he determined, after the actual fighting was over, to make an excursion to some of the neighbouring houses. Neither knowing anything of the adjacent country, nor of the relative positions of the armies, he started off straight in the direction of the enemy; and coming up to a small plantation, where he made sure he should find all he wanted, he encountered six Yankees, armed with muskets, coming out of the house towards him. Scheibert, well aware that the worst thing he could do would be to turn tail, with admirable presence of mind drew his sword; and, flourishing it wildly over his head, rode up to the astonished Yankees, crying out, in broken English, "Surrender, you scoundrels! all my cavalry is right behind me." The bewildered soldiers at once

dropped their arms, and the gallant Prussian marched the whole six triumphantly back to General Lee, by whom he was highly complimented for his coolness and pluck. A rapid succession of despatches and reports reached our Commander-in-Chief during the night, which he had considerable difficulty in deciphering by the flickering light of the bivouac-fire. Like Longfellow's Ajax, his prayer was for light "throughout that long and dreary night." It so chanced that, during our advance on Chancellorsville, I had discovered, among other luxuries, a box of excellent candles, which now lay a little outside our lines, and quite close to the enemy's skirmishers. To attempt the adventure with the hope of bringing the much-desired relief to the eyes of our beloved commander, was more than I could resist, so I set forward on foot towards the spot, crawling cautiously through the bushes, and, favoured by the darkness, succeeded in finding the box, and providing myself with a sufficient provision of candles, without attracting the attention of the enemy's videttes. On reaching the temporary headquarters, and presenting my prize to General Lee, he eyed me with his calm penetrating glance, and said, "Major, I am much obliged to you; but I know where you got these candles, and you acted wrongly in exposing your life for a simple act of courtesy." I willingly submitted to the rebuke,

only too happy to have been able personally to oblige one whom we all so much admired, and for whom not one of us but would gladly have risked his life.

During the night we were allowed but little sleep, frequent alarms calling us into the saddle; moreover, the place which Stuart had selected for our repose, because it was close to the centre of our lines, being also exactly in range of the hostile artillery, which opened whenever the skirmishing grew louder, we were several times roused from our slumbers by shells plunging all around us, one of which actually burst in the top of a cherry-tree under which I reposed, covering me with a litter of torn and scattered branches. Not more than 150 yards from us, in and around a large barn, were collected more than 300 Federal wounded, and the tenement which sheltered them being ever and anon struck by the cannon-balls, the pitiful cries of the poor fellows, many of whom were finally despatched, while others received fresh wounds, added to the horrors and confusion of this dreadful night. The morning of the 4th was fraught, in like manner, with excitement and disquiet; at times the skirmishing and the cannonade which followed it grew so warm as to lead, until about ten o'clock, to the expectation of an advance of the Federal army. About noon, however, every-

thing sank into tranquillity again, and we were enabled to continue our ministrations towards the wounded, and to bury our dead. All the Federal dead, however, as well as the innumerable carcasses of animals, still encumbered the ground, and the effluvium was already growing unpleasant. But I will not attempt to go into the horrors of this battle-field; they surpassed all that I had ever seen before, the fearful effect of the artillery firing going beyond all that had occurred on any previous occasion. In the course of the afternoon we received cheerful news of the proceedings of M'Laws and Early, who, attacking the enemy simultaneously, had succeeded in forcing them back upon Fredericksburg, retaking the heights, and finally, by a spirited attack, driving the whole of Sedgwick's corps to the other side of the river. Several ammunition and provision trains, besides prisoners, had fallen into our hands, and, but for the extreme caution of our generals, the whole of this portion of the hostile forces might have been annihilated.

The night of this day passed over much in the same way as its predecessor, and was followed by a misty, sultry morning; and this kind of weather promoting the process of putrefaction, the air was poisoned with emanations from the dead to such an extent as to be almost insupportable. There being,

moreover, danger of the men's health being affected, all that could be spared from the front were employed burying the hundreds of disfigured corpses. The enemy being very quiet all the morning, Stuart, suspecting a retrograde movement of their army, ordered our skirmishers to advance, who discovered soon enough, however, that the Federals were still in large force in our front, and posted behind works of a formidable character. Accordingly, after a severe skirmish, accompanied by a heavy cannonade, lasting more than an hour, our men were withdrawn to their original position. The afternoon brought a sudden change in the weather; the temperature fell considerably for the season of the year, and heavy rain, with violent winds, continued all the evening and a great part of the night. Meanwhile General Lee had determined to assault the enemy in their strong position. M'Laws's and Anderson's divisions had already approached United States Ford on the 5th, by a circuitous march, thus menacing the left flank and line of retreat of the Federal army; and at earliest dawn on the 6th Jackson's corps received orders to advance, Rodes's division taking the lead. My own instructions from General Stuart having been to move forward with the skirmishers and reconnoitre the enemy's position as closely as possible, I cautiously made my way

through the woods, expecting at every instant to hear the skirmishers open fire, followed by the thunder of the artillery; but finding all quiet, I continued to advance until I reached the formidable intrenchments thrown up by the Federals, extending several miles, which I found they had entirely abandoned, leaving behind in them a large quantity of ammunition and stores of provisions, which they had not taken time to destroy. Just as I was entering the fortifications, General Rodes rode up, saying, "I am sure the enemy is in full retreat, and is probably by this time on the other side of the river." Both of us being equally eager to discover what had really become of the great Federal army, we galloped off entirely by ourselves along the muddy road, leaving everybody behind.

General Hooker had done wonders amidst the difficulties of this wild entangled forest. Works of great strength and extent had been constructed at nearly every quarter of a mile's distance; roads had been cut and cleared through the dense undergrowth, along which telegraph wires were laid to the principal headquarters of the army; and wherever branch-roads turned off to the different corps, divisions, and brigades, large signs were conspicuously erected to guard against mistakes or confusion. Notwithstand-

ing these wise precautions, however, considerable numbers of the Yankee soldiers became mazed amidst these extensive woods, and we continually encountered them along our route, sometimes in squads of six or eight. These poor devils, all bespattered with mud, and soaked to their skins by the drenching rain, not recognising us as enemies, our grey uniforms being concealed beneath large india-rubber cloaks, innocently accosted us to inquire the way towards their regiments, and on discovering our real character, surrendered with alacrity, laying down their arms, and marching off rapidly to the rear at our request, as submissively as though they had been our own men. General Rodes and I in this way captured, merely our two selves, more than sixty of these stragglers, who, had they been tempted to act at all pluckily, might easily either have killed or made prisoners of us both. We had not far to ride in order to discover that the hostile army had entirely disappeared from our side of the Rappahannock; and as we approached the river, we could just catch sight of their rearguard climbing the hills on the opposite shore, where several batteries of artillery were placed in position, while a number of riflemen were posted along the banks of the stream. With these our sharpshooters, on coming up, became

engaged in a slight skirmish, and we were favoured with several shots from the hostile batteries; but soon even these parting tokens of farewell from Hooker's great army were discontinued, and, vanishing entirely, it ceased to give forth any sign.

Seeing his army greatly demoralised by a succession of defeats, and all his plans and combinations frustrated, General Hooker had already on the previous day determined to withdraw his troops to the other side of the Rappahannock, the waters of which were rapidly rising, and threatened to carry away the pontoon-bridges, and render retreat impossible. The retrograde movement was commenced at about dusk on the 5th, and was conducted with considerable order; the bridges had been covered with layers of twigs and small branches, in order to deaden the rumbling sound of the artillery and trains passing over them, while the heavy fall of rain during the evening, followed up by bursts of thunder-storm in the night, completely masked the sounds of the retreating hosts, whose movements, exactly as at Fredericksburg under similar circumstances, entirely escaped the vigilance of our pickets. As Hooker was retracing his course back towards his old position near Falmouth, so did our troops commence at about noon their march towards their old camping-ground

near Fredericksburg. A. P. Hill, having now entirely recovered from his slight wound, assumed the command of Jackson's corps; and as his men marched past us they spontaneously raised an enthusiastic cheer for General Stuart, thus testifying their admiration of the gallant chief who had led them so splendidly against the enemy, and directed them to the achievement of a brilliant victory, and one for which, in my opinion, Stuart never gained sufficient credit from his superiors. Thus ended the battle of Chancellorsville, and the short but decisive spring campaign. The losses of the Federal army amounted to at least 20,000 men, of whom nearly 8000 were made prisoners. There were captured, besides, thirty pieces of artillery, large quantities of ammunition, and more than 30,000 stand of small-arms. The loss on our side was severe, amounting to nearly 10,000 men in prisoners, killed, and wounded—our beloved and ever-famous Stonewall being among the latter, a fact which filled every soldier's heart with grief. It was not at that time at all anticipated that Jackson's wounds would end fatally; and several days after the unfortunate incident, I heard from the mouth of the surgeon who attended him, that the General was doing very well, and that from the state of his health at that time there was every prospect of his speedy recovery.

General Hooker, after all his disasters, had the audacity to speak of his operations as successful; and, in order to blind the eyes of the North to the true state of affairs, he ended the campaign by issuing to his soldiers an order congratulating them on their achievements and success.

CHAPTER XXIII.

START AFTER STONEMAN—I AM REPORTED KILLED—HEADQUARTERS NEAR ORANGE COURT-HOUSE—STONEWALL JACKSON'S DEATH—REORGANISATION OF THE ARMY—HEADQUARTERS ONCE MORE AT CULPEPPER—GREAT REVIEW OF THE CAVALRY CORPS—GREAT CAVALRY BATTLE AT BRANDY STATION, 9TH JUNE 1863.

WHILST the bulk of our army was marching in the direction of Fredericksburg, General Stuart and his Staff started with Fitz Lee's brigade towards Spotsylvania Court-house, where we arrived late in the evening, and our regiment went into bivouac. Quite close to the camp was Mr F.'s plantation; here, during the winter, I had been a frequent visitor, and in consideration of the hardships and fatigues we had already undergone, General Stuart acceded to my friend's invitation to make his house our headquarters for the night. Accordingly the supper-hour found us all assembled round Mr F.'s hospitable and well-furnished board, the honours of which were done by the pretty young ladies of the family; and under

these advantageous circumstances we once more relished the comforts of life with a zest which only soldiers feel after the privations of a rough campaign. It seemed that I had but just lain down to sleep when I heard Stuart's voice in the morning calling me up to ride with him to General Lee's, whose headquarters were fixed in the old spot near Fredericksburg. Here we first heard of Stoneman's raid in the direction of Richmond. Leaving one of his brigades to occupy William Lee's command, the General, with a body of several thousand cavalry, had crossed the Rapidan, struck the Richmond-Gordonsville Railway at Louisa Court-house, and, pushing to within four miles of the Confederate capital, had taken a multitude of negroes and horses, capturing, besides, a number of trains, and several hundreds of our wounded soldiers on their way to the hospitals. Both our lines of railway communication having been damaged, and the telegraph wires cut, it was not till unfortunately late that we received this disastrous news. In the hope there might yet be a chance of cutting off the retreat of the Federal raiders, our Commander-in-Chief ordered Stuart to set out at once in pursuit of them; and a few hours later we were making our way through the woods with Fitz Lee's brigade in the direction of Gordonsville. After marching all night, we learned at daybreak that the

whole Federal raiding force, turning from Richmond towards the White House, had crossed the Pamunkey river, and was now entirely beyond our reach. This, of course, completely altered the plans of our General; and as we were then not far from Orange Court-house, where our trains had been ordered to assemble, and we were sure to find supplies both for man and beast, thither, after a short rest, it was determined to march. None more than myself welcomed the order to halt, for the only charger I had now left was completely broken down, and my servant Henry, leading a Yankee horse I had captured after Chancellorsville, was still far off. Badly off as I was in this particular, I was delighted to hear of a magnificent horse for sale at a plantation in Louisa County; and permission having been readily granted me by General Stuart, I set off thither, accompanied by one of our couriers as a guide, and a few hours later the command continued its march towards Orange. On reaching my destination, I found the animal far exceeded all my expectations. He was a tall thoroughbred bay, of beautiful form and action, and the price demanded being comparatively cheap—namely, a thousand dollars—I at once concluded the bargain; and after spending the rest of the day and the night beneath Mr T.'s hospitable roof, I rode off towards Orange just as the first cheerful beams

of the morning sun were darting through the fresh green masses of the gigantic chestnuts and beeches which hemmed round the plantation, happy in the consciousness that the fine animal curvetting under me with such elastic steps was my own. As, *en route*, I had to pass by the little village of Verdiersville, where, it will be remembered, I had such a narrow escape in August '62, I stopped to pay my respects to the kind lady who had so courageously assisted me in my retreat. I had never failed to do so whenever chance brought me to the neighbourhood, and always found myself received with the most cordial welcome. On this occasion, however, I was not destined to meet the same kind of reception; for, instead of the cheerful greeting to which I had been accustomed, the old lady, as soon as she caught sight of me, turned suddenly pale, and, with a loud shriek, fled into the house. Puzzled beyond measure at so extraordinary a proceeding, I pressed for an explanation, when a Richmond paper was handed to me and my attention directed to a paragraph commencing, "Among those who fell at the battle of Chancellorsville we regret to report the death of Major von Borcke," &c. Here followed a flattering estimate of my personal qualities, and a minute account of my death. My amiable friend was so firmly impressed with the fact of my demise, that when I accosted her she believed it was

my ghost; and even during our subsequent interview I found some difficulty in persuading her of my identity. The rumour of my having been killed spread over the whole country, and was accepted as true by every part of our army where I had not been seen since the battle, and the regret expressed at my loss, and manifest pleasure exhibited by both soldiers and citizens to know me still among them, administered not a little to my self-esteem. Beside the many letters of condolence and offers received by Stuart on my account, greatly to his amusement, a request was despatched by Governor Letcher to General Lee to have my body forwarded, and claiming the privilege of having it interred with all the honours of the State of Virginia. To this demand, General Lee sent the following characteristic reply: "Can't spare it: it's in pursuit of Stoneman."

Our headquarters were established on one of the hills forming a semicircle round one side of the beautiful little valley in which the pleasant village of Orange Court-house is situated, and we overlooked the town, as well as a great part of the rich country around it, clad in the fresh bright verdure of May. The weather was perfect; provisions of every sort were abundant, and men and beasts were rapidly recovering from the fatigues and privations of the late

rough campaign. Orange enjoys an enviable renown for the beauty of its women; and in the female society which it afforded we took every opportunity our duties permitted to pass a few agreeable hours, which were sometimes devoted to dancing and sometimes to horseback excursions. A cloud soon came over our happiness, however, in the sad news of the death of our beloved Stonewall Jackson, who expired on the 9th, partially from his wounds, but more directly from pneumonia, the result of a severe cold which he caught on the night when he was struck, and which the treatment he insisted on adopting rendered thus fatal.* Few men have ever been more regretted—few more respected by foe, no less than friend, than was Stonewall Jackson; and his soldiers grieved over his death as though they had been bereft of a father. To me it was a sad blow to lose at once a kind and dear friend and a leader for whom I felt the heartiest admiration. Brought so frequently into contact with this great soldier in the field of battle, or in camp, where he often shared his

* The immediate cause of Jackson's death is not generally known. I received the particulars of it from Dr M'Guire, who attended the General, and who told me that, against his urgent dissuasion, he had insisted on treating his cold by the application of wet blankets, which so aggravated its severity that, weakened as was his system by loss of blood and the shock of amputation, this imprudence became fatal.

blankets with me when I had come to him late at night, bringing in my reports, or applying for orders, I had every opportunity of estimating, both in its grandeur and in its familiar traits, his noble and generous character. Jackson had certain whimsical peculiarities which exhibited themselves in his manner and in his dress, but most of the stories current at the time, turning upon his eccentricities, were entire fabrications. He was a sincerely pious man, but without a taint of Puritanism, and enjoyed the pleasures of life and a harmless joke as much as anybody. His conversation was lively and fascinating, and he would often chime in with us in our merry talk and laughter round the camp-fires. For General Lee his admiration and affection were alike unbounded; and, in the native modesty of his character, he as persistently undervalued his own services. Concerning these he would often say, "All the credit of my successes belongs to General Lee; they were his plans on which I acted, and I only executed his orders." But General Lee knew full well how to appreciate the great military qualities of his lieutenant, and the value of his assistance; and when the news reached him of the hero's death, he exclaimed, "It would have been better for the country if I had fallen rather than Stonewall Jackson." The sad intelligence was officially

communicated to his mourning army by the Commander-in-Chief in the following order, dated the 11th:—

"The daring will and energy of this great and good soldier, by a decree of an all-wise Providence, are now lost to us; but while we mourn his death, we feel that his spirit lives, and will inspire the whole army with his indomitable courage and unshaken confidence in God, as our hope and our strength. Let his name be a watchword for his corps, who have followed him to victory in so many fields. Let officers and soldiers imitate his invincible determination to do everything in the defence of our beloved country.

"R. E. LEE."

According to his wish, Jackson's remains were buried at Lexington, Virginia, where in his simple grave he now sleeps, while his memory lives fresh in the hearts of all who knew him, and both hemispheres regard him as the greatest of those who fell for their principles in this gigantic civil war.

The remaining weeks of the beautiful month of May passed away in quiet, so far as regards any interruption on the part of the enemy; but were actively employed in preparations for the summer

campaign, and in reorganising our whole army, the ranks of which were rapidly filled by the return of the absentees, and strengthened by the arrival of numerous reinforcements—Longstreet having been recalled with his two divisions from North Carolina, and several brigades joined to these from Beauregard's army. The army of Northern Virginia was now divided into three equal and distinct corps, each numbering about 20,000 men. Longstreet commanded the 1st corps, consisting of Hood's, M'Laws's, and Picket's divisions; Ewell the 2d, consisting of Early's, Rodes's, and Johnson's divisions, formerly under Jackson's command, and now committed to this general in accordance with a request made by Stonewall on his deathbed, in his solicitude for the welfare of his veterans. The 3d corps was placed under the command of A. P. Hill, and was formed of Anderson's, Pender's, and Heth's divisions. The cavalry, which had also been strengthened by several new brigades from the South, was formed into a separate corps of three divisions, commanded by Hampton, Fitz Lee, and William Lee. About the 18th of May, General Lee, who had continued to confront the enemy at Fredericksburg, began gradually to shift the position of his troops towards Gordonsville and Orange. The cavalry had to give place to the infantry, and on the 20th we received orders to march

to Culpepper Court-house, where we established our headquarters, close to the old camping ground, stationing our divisions nearer the river, which was again closely picketed. Our tents were pitched in a beautiful spot, overshadowed by magnificent hickory and tulip-poplar trees, and surrounded by broad clover fields, where our horses were richly pastured, and through which the pretty little river "Mountain Run" rolled its silver waters between picturesque banks, and afforded us the chance of a magnificent cool bath, and plenty of sport with the rod and line. Our cavalry were in the highest spirits, and were kept in constant and salutary activity by incessant drilling and other preparations for the impending campaign. Hundreds of men flocked in daily from their distant homes, bringing with them fresh horses. General Robertson had joined us with his splendid brigade from North Carolina, as also had General Jones, with his command from the valley of Virginia; and nearly all the men of Hampton's division had returned from South Carolina and Mississippi. Our horse-artillery, under command of Pelham's successor, Major Berkham, had been augmented by several batteries, and the old ones had been supplied with fresh horses, so that altogether we now possessed a more numerous and better equipped force than ever before.

We all looked with pride upon this magnificent body of troops; and as a review had been ordered for the 5th of June, all the commencement of the month we were busy preparing for that important event. Invitations having been sent out to the whole circle of our acquaintances far and near, the hotels of the town, and as many private houses as had any accommodation to spare, were got ready for the reception of our guests, many of whom, after all, we had to put under tents. Among those we expected on this occasion, was General Randolph, the former Secretary of War, a warm friend of Stuart's and mine, and to whom it will be remembered I was indebted for so much kindness on my first arrival in Richmond. Gladly eager to give him a proof of my esteem, and the sense I had of his kindness, I started off on the morning of the 4th for Gordonsville, to meet our friend on his road, and I had the pleasure of bringing him by special train into Culpepper with all honours, our battle-flag floating from the locomotive. Every train that afternoon brought in fresh crowds of our guests, and we all assembled at the station to receive them, and forward them to their destination by the ambulances and waggons we had got prepared for that purpose. In the evening there was a ball at the Town Hall, which went off pleasantly enough, although it was not, in the language

of the reporter, "a gay and dazzling scene, illuminated by floods of light streaming from numerous chandeliers," for our supply of light was limited to a few tallow candles; and when the moon rose, we were glad to avail ourselves of her services by adjourning to the spacious verandah. As the morning of the 5th dawned bright and beautiful, we completed our preparations, and gave the last touch to our arms and equipments; and about eight o'clock General Stuart and his Staff mounted their horses and made for the plains of Brandy Station, which that day were for once to be the scene, not of a battle in all its sanguinary tumult, but of a military spectacle comparatively peaceful in character. Our little band presented a gay and gallant appearance as we rode forth to the sound of our bugles, all mounted on fine chargers, and clad in our best accoutrements, our plumes nodding, and our battle-flag waving in the breeze. I myself had on a uniform new from head to foot; and the horse on which I was mounted seemed to me in the very perfection of beauty as it danced with springing step upon the turf, its glossy coat shining like burnished gold in the morning sun. As our approach was heralded by the flourish of trumpets, many of the ladies in the village came forth to greet us from the porches and verandahs of the houses, and showered down flowers upon our path.

But if the smiles and patriotic demonstrations of the daughters of old Virginia were pleasant and flattering to us as mortal men, not less grateful to our soldiers' hearts were the cheers of more than 12,000 horsemen, which rose in the air as we came upon the open plain near Brandy Station, where the whole cavalry corps awaited us, drawn out in a line a mile and a half long, at the extreme right of which twenty-four guns of our horse-artillery thundered forth a salute. About ten o'clock the marching past commenced. General Stuart had taken up his position on a slight eminence, whither many hundreds of spectators, mostly ladies, had gathered, in ambulances and on horseback, anxiously awaiting the approach of the troops. The corps passed first by squadrons, and at a walk, and the magnificent spectacle of so many thousand troopers splendidly mounted made the heart swell with pride, and impressed one with the conviction that nothing could resist the attack of such a body of troops. The review ended with a sham charge of the whole corps by regiments, the artillery advancing at the same time at a gallop, and opening a rapid fire upon an imaginary enemy. The day wound up with a ball; but as the night was fine we danced in the open air on a piece of turf near our headquarters, and by the light of enormous wood-fires, the ruddy glare of which upon the animated

groups of our assembly gave to the whole scene a wild and romantic effect.

Our army having been all this while slowly approaching Culpepper, division after division, on the 7th we marched by order of General Lee, who was now among us, closer to the Rappahannock, taking up our headquarters on the heights near Brandy Station. Next day the cavalry corps had the honour of being reviewed by our Commander-in-Chief, but this time the spectators were no longer ladies, our fair visitors having departed, but the whole of Hood's division, amounting to about 10,000 men, who were present as lookers-on, at their own request. No sooner was the review over than a courier galloped up with the report that the enemy had made his appearance in strong force on the river. This called us at once to the front with several brigades, and for a time we were in momentary expectation of a serious engagement. After some demonstrations, however, at the different fords, which were promptly met by our pickets, the Yankees disappeared again, and our troops marched back to their camps. On my return to headquarters I found, to my intense disgust, that my negro servant Harry having, against orders, turned two of my horses and Kitt my mule loose, they had straggled off, and every effort to find them had till then failed. To lose my steeds thus, on the very eve

of active operations, was a serious affair; horses were stolen daily, and among the thousands of animals assembled around us, it was a difficult matter to find them again. I was the more put out, as by bad luck I had been splendidly mounted, having, besides my new purchase, which was still left me, two fine chargers—a stout bay which I had from Major Berkham, the chief of our horse-artillery, in exchange for my captured Yankee horse, and my old black, which was now in fine condition. All the rest of the day was spent in further efforts to discover the stray animals, till at last I returned late at night, tired and out of humour, to the camp.

After a few hours' sleep I was awakened about daybreak by the sound of several cannon-shots. In an instant I was on my legs, and stepping out of my tent I distinctly heard a brisk firing of small-arms in the direction of the river. An orderly shortly afterwards rode up, reporting that the enemy, under cover of the fog, had suddenly fallen upon our pickets, had crossed the river in strong force at several points, and pressed forward so rapidly that they had come upon Jones's brigade before the greater part of the men had had time to saddle their horses. It was fortunate that the sharpshooters of this command, seconded by a section of our horse-artillery, were enabled by a well-directed fire to impede the movements of the attack-

ing foe, so as to give our regiments time to form, and by falling back some distance to take up a position further to the rear. It was evident, both to General Stuart and myself, that the intentions of the Federals in this movement were of a serious character, and that they were determined on making a further advance, although we differed in opinion as to the best way of opposing resistance to them. The General wished to march with his whole force against the enemy, and fight them wherever he might meet them. My proposal was to place the greater part of the corps and our 24 guns on the heights, and wait there till the designs of the Yankees, who were still hidden by the woods, and their numbers, should be more clearly disclosed, and then, by offering a feint with a few of our advanced brigades, to draw them towards us. As no favourable position for their artillery would be found in the plains, our guns would play with great effect on their dense ranks when they emerged into the open before us, and for once our horsemen would have a chance of showing their superiority over the hostile cavalry by a united charge of our whole force. But Stuart's ardour was impatient of delay; and being, besides, under the impression that to allow the enemy to proceed further would let them know too much of the position of our infantry, which it was our duty to cover,

he resolved to move at once against the advancing foe, and gave me orders to ride to the front and rapidly reconnoitre the state of affairs, while he would follow as quickly as the troops could be brought into action. Major Berkham had hastily placed some of his batteries in position upon an eminence which I had just passed, and was reaching a patch of wood where Jones's men were engaged in a sharp skirmish with the Federals, when in overwhelming numbers they made a sudden dash upon the most advanced regiment of that brigade, which broke in utter confusion, carrying everything with them in their flight. A scene of disgraceful stampede ensued—single horsemen galloped off the field in all directions, waggons and ambulances which had been detained to carry off camp utensils rattled over the ground, while with loud shouts of victory a dense mass of Federal horsemen broke forth from the woods. At this critical moment Berkham opened a rapid fire, throwing such a shower of canister and grape at close range upon the pursuing host, that they recoiled and retired again into the forest, thus affording an opportunity of rallying and re-forming our demoralised troops. Just as the confusion was at its very height, my eye alighted on my little mule Kitt, on which one of the waggoners was mounted, and was passing me at full speed. The temptation to recover this valuable piece

of property was not to be withstood, even under the exciting circumstances of the occasion; and quickly overtaking the fellow, I ordered him to give up my property, but the fear of falling into the hands of the enemy so possessed the poor devil that he begged to be allowed to bring it back to me at headquarters. Thinking, however, it was only a just punishment on him to let him make good his escape by the aid of his own legs, I made him dismount, and sent Kitt to the rear by one of the couriers who accompanied me, where Henry greeted the return of his favourite with every mark of delight. All our brigades having now arrived from the more distant camps, our line of battle, nearly three miles in length, could be regularly formed; and along the woods which border the Rappahannock the multitudinous firing of our dismounted sharpshooters sounded like the rattle of musketry in a regular battle. We held our ground tolerably well for some time, but it soon became evident that the enemy were in far superior numbers and supported by infantry, large columns of which were reported by William Lee, who commanded on our extreme left, to be crossing the river. Towards this point I was sent by General Stuart to watch the movements of the enemy, with orders to send a report every quarter of an hour by one of the body of couriers whom I took with me. William Lee's brig-

ade was placed on a ridge of hills, with its skirmishers on the river-bank and along a formidable stone fence running across an open field, over which the Federals advanced in strong numbers, but were again and again repulsed as soon as they came within range of our sharpshooters, who were well seconded by the accurate firing of one of our batteries on the heights. Buried in the deep grass, William Lee and I lay close to our guns watching the progress of the battle, when we were startled by a heavy cannonade in our rear, apparently in the direction of our headquarters at Brandy Station. Thither I hastened off at once, promising General Lee to send him information as soon as I had discovered the state of affairs. From some stragglers who galloped past me as I approached the station, I gathered, in a confused way, that the Federals were in our rear. To this report I gave little credit, but on emerging from the forest I found that they had only spoken the truth, for there a sight awaited me which made the blood run cold in my veins. The heights of Brandy and the spot where our headquarters had been were perfectly swarming with Yankees, while the men of one of our brigades were scattered wide over the plateau, chased in all directions by their enemies. Seeing one of our regiments still in line, but already swerving and on the point of breaking, I rode up to the Colonel, who

seemed to have lost all presence of mind, and threatened to arrest him on the spot, and to prefer a charge of cowardice against him, if he did not at once lead his men on to the attack. This had the desired effect, and with a faint cheer the regiment galloped forward against the enemy; but two hostile regiments starting to meet us, the space we were charging over diminished with increasing rapidity, until at last, when only a hundred yards apart, our disheartened soldiers broke and fled in shameful confusion. Carried along for a moment by the torrent of fugitives, I perceived that we were hastening towards an opening in a fence which had been made to facilitate the movements of our artillery, and, soon outstripping the rest by the fleetness of my charger, I reached the gap, and placed myself in the centre, calling out to them that I would kill every man who tried to pass me, and knocking over with the flat of my sabre two of those who had ventured too near me. This had the effect of arresting the flight for a time, and I then managed to rally round me about a hundred of these same men whom, on this identical ground, I had, on a previous occasion, led to victory. "Men!" I shouted, "remember your previous deeds on these very fields; follow me—charge!" and, putting spurs into my charger's flanks, the noble animal bounded forth against the Federals, who were now close upon

us, but whose lines, by the length of the pursuit, had become very loose. The very same men, however, who had fought so gallantly with me before had lost all self-confidence, and after following me a short distance, they turned again to flight, abruptly leaving me quite alone in the midst of the charging foe. A great hulking Yankee corporal, with some eight or ten men, immediately gave chase after me, calling on me to surrender, and discharging their carbines and revolvers in my direction. Not heeding this summons, I urged my horse to its highest speed; and now turning to the rear myself, and clearing the fence at a part where it was too high for them to follow, I soon left my pursuers far behind. I had not galloped many hundred yards further, however, when I overtook Captain White of our Staff, who had received a shot-wound in his neck, and was so weak as scarcely to be able to keep himself up in the saddle. Having to support my wounded comrade, whom I was determined to save, retarded my pace considerably, and several times the shouts and yells of the Yankees sounded so close at our horses' heels that I gave up all hope of escape. Suddenly, however, the Yankees gave up the pursuit, and I was enabled to draw bridle after a very exciting run. A courier happening to pass, I left Captain White in his charge, and hastened once more to the front, full of anxiety as to the final

result of the conflict. To my great astonishment, as I rode on I could see nothing of the enemy; and, by the time I had reached the plateau of Brandy, I found the state of affairs had taken an entirely altered aspect. Instead of a menacing host of Federals, their dead and wounded thickly strewed the ground: one of their batteries, every horse of which had been killed, stood abandoned; and to the right, far away, a confused mass of fugitives were seen closely pursued by our men, over whose heads our artillery were throwing shell after shell on the retreating foe. I was not long in meeting with General Stuart, whom I found directing the operations from the highest part of the plateau. I was informed by him that the portion of Federal cavalry which had rendered our position so critical had consisted of two brigades, commanded by General Perry Windham, an Englishman in the Yankee service, who, by taking a circuitous route along an unguarded bridle-path, had succeeded in taking us in the rear, so causing all the confusion and panic which had very nearly decided the fate of the day. But just when the danger was at the highest and the stampede in full career—namely, at the very crisis I was unfortunate enough to witness—the Georgia regiment of Hampton's old brigade, under its commander, the gallant Colonel Young, and the 11th Virginia, under Colonel Lomax,

had come up to the succour, and, throwing themselves with an impetuous charge on the temporary victors, had completely routed and driven them to flight, many killed and wounded, as well as prisoners, besides a battery, being left behind. General Windham himself was shot through the leg during the short *mêlée*, and had a narrow escape from capture; and several colonels and other officers were among the dead. The flight of the Federals had been so sudden and headlong that it gave rise to a number of odd incidents, among which may be recalled an accident which befell one of their buglers, who, in the blindness of his hurry, rode straight up against an old ice-house, breaking through the wooden partition, and tumbling headlong, horse and all, into the deep hole within. The horse was killed on the spot, but the rider escaped miraculously, and was hauled up with ropes amidst shouts of laughter from the bystanders at so ridiculous an adventure of battle.

The greater part of our corps was now placed along the ridge, in exactly the position I had recommended in the morning, whilst further on, in the plains below, were arrayed in line of battle many thousand Federal cavalry, supported by two of their divisions of infantry, whose glittering bayonets could be easily discerned as they deployed from the distant woods. Meanwhile our Commander-in-Chief had

arrived at the scene of action, and a division of our infantry had come up to our support, which was still in the woods about a quarter of a mile to the rear, but quite in readiness to act when necessary. The time was now about four in the afternoon, and the fire, which in our immediate front had gradually slackened to a desultory skirmishing of the dismounted sharpshooters, but supported by a regular cannonade, grew hotter and hotter on the left, where William Lee, who had given up his original position soon after I left him, was slowly falling back before the enemy, turning and giving battle whenever too closely pressed by his pursuers. This splendid command could just be seen emerging from the woods on our left, where Jones's brigade was drawn up to support it, when Stuart, thinking the time had come for an aggressive movement, sent me off to order the two brigades to move forward in a united charge upon the pursuing enemy. Feeling that prompt action was necessary, I rode down the hillside with incautious speed, and my horse, broken down by the excessive exertions of the day, stumbled and rolled heavily over with me. Stuart, believing that horse and rider were struck down by a cannon-ball, ordered some couriers to my assistance, and was just sending off some one else with the orders I was charged with, when the animal regained its legs,

and, vaulting quickly into the saddle, I started off again faster than before. About fifty yards further, coming upon very broken ground, my horse fell again, so contusing my leg that I fancied at first it was broken; but as the eyes of many hundreds of my comrades were on me I proudly fought against the agony I suffered, and, with difficulty remounting, I continued my ride, and in a few minutes was, without further accident, at the point of destination. Lee's and Jones's men received the order to charge with loud cheers—the former moving forward to the attack in such magnificent style that an enthusiastic shout of applause rose along our lines on the heights, whence the conflict could be plainly witnessed. The enemy received us with a shower of bullets. General William Lee fell wounded in the thigh. Colonel Williams was shot dead at the head of his regiment, and many other officers fell killed and wounded. But nothing could arrest the impetuous charge of the gallant Virginians; and in a few minutes the Federal lines were broken and driven in disorderly flight towards the river, where the fire of several reserve batteries, posted on the opposite shore, put a stop to the pursuit. This success on our left decided the fate of the day. About dusk, the main body of the Federal cavalry, seeing their right flank now entirely

exposed, commenced a retreat under protection of their infantry, and by nightfall the whole of the hostile force had once more recrossed the Rappahannock. Thus ended the greatest cavalry battle ever fought on the American continent, about 12,000 men being engaged on our side, and about 15,000 on that of the Federals, besides the infantry support; and the combat lasted from daybreak till nightfall. The loss of our opponents was very severe in dead and wounded, and a great number of officers fell, among whom was a brigadier-general, several colonels, besides many other of subordinate rank. About 400 privates and 40 officers were captured, and a battery of four guns already mentioned. The victory was a dearly-bought one on our side, and numbers of those who but a few days before had gaily attended the review, were now stretched cold and lifeless on the same ground. Among those whose death we mourned, was the gallant Colonel Hampton of the 2d South Carolina, brother of General Hampton, and Colonel Williams of the 2d North Carolina; General William Lee, Colonel Butler, and many other officers of rank, were among the wounded. Our Staff had suffered very severely: Captain White wounded, Lieutenant Goldsborough taken prisoner, and the gallant Captain

Farley killed. Poor Farley! after innumerable escapes from the perils into which his brilliant gallantry led him, his fate had overtaken him at last, and he died as heroically as he had lived. While riding towards the enemy, side by side with Colonel Butler, a shell which passed clean through their horses, killing both these, shattered at the same time one of Butler's legs below the knee, and carried off one of Farley's close up to the body. When the surgeon arrived he naturally wished to attend first to the Captain as the more dangerously wounded, but this the brave young fellow positively refused, saying that Colonel Butler's life was more valuable to the country than his own, and he felt he should soon die. Two hours afterwards he was a corpse. We passed the night at a farmhouse close to the battle-field; but in spite of the fatigues of the day I could find no rest, and passed the best part of the night bathing my injured leg, which was very swollen and painful, with cold water.

I did not allow this, however, to prevent my accompanying General Stuart on the following morning on a ride towards the river and over the plains, which presented all the appearance of a regular battle-field. Principally was this the case in the immediate neighbourhood of our old headquarters,

where the ground was thickly strewn with carcasses, on which hundreds of turkey buzzards had been gorging themselves, and were lying about in numbers. In one spot, a few acres broad, where the cavalry had charged close up to a fence held by our skirmishers, I counted as many as thirty dead horses struck down by the bullets of our sharpshooters. On our return to headquarters, which in the mean time had been transferred to the shade of an oak grove a mile further to the rear, and close to a fine plantation possessed by a Mr Bradford, my negro Henry met me with an air of triumphant exultation, having with untiring energy, backed by cunning adroitness, succeeded in recovering one of my two missing horses—the stout bay. The illegitimate appropriator of the poor beast had frightfully disfigured it to avoid detection; its beautiful mane and tail were hacked short, but the sharp eyes of the negro had not been baffled by this villanous trick. I had been the subject of General Stuart's raillery *apropos* of my lost horses, but ere long I was enabled to turn the laugh against him, for two of his best horses went astray and were lost in the same way, nor were they recovered for months after. Large numbers of the enemy being still on the other side of the river and displaying considerable activity, we

expected that the late unsuccessful reconnaissance in force would be shortly renewed, and on the 13th we were even called to our saddles by an alarm. It proved a groundless one, however; and the following days passed without further active demonstration on the part of the Federals.

CHAPTER XXIV.

COMMENCEMENT OF THE SUMMER CAMPAIGN — FORWARD MOVEMENT OF THE ARMY OF VIRGINIA—CAVALRY FIGHTS IN LOUDON AND FAUQUIER COUNTIES — THE CAVALRY FIGHT NEAR MIDDLEBURG, 19TH OF JUNE — I AM SEVERELY WOUNDED—STAY AT UPPERVILLE, AND RETREAT FROM THERE TO MR B.'S PLANTATION—THE LAST EIGHTEEN MONTHS OF MY STAY IN THE CONFEDERACY — DEPARTURE FOR RICHMOND, AND SOJOURN AT THE CAPITAL AND IN THE VICINITY—WINTER 1863-64—STUART'S DEATH —DEPARTURE FOR ENGLAND.

GENERAL LEE had by this completed his preparations for an advance into the enemy's country, whither the theatre of war was now to be transferred; and, whilst a comparatively small body of troops still maintained a show in front of the Federals at Fredericksburg, the bulk of our army was being concentrated in the vicinity of Culpepper, apparently without any suspicion of the fact on the part of the enemy's commander-in-chief. The first object General Lee sought to compass, was to clear the valley of Virginia of its hostile occupants and to capture the

town of Winchester. Ewell with his troops had already started in that direction some days before, and on the 15th the rest of our infantry began to move forward. Stuart was ordered to cover the movements of our army and protect its flank by marching on the Fauquier side of the Blue Ridge Mountains; and accordingly the morning of the 16th found us betimes *en route,* and in high glee at the thought of once more invading Yankeedom. Having crossed the Hazel and Rappahannock rivers, we marched on in the same line we had followed in our retreat of November '62, and at noon halted for an hour to feed our horses at the little town of Orleans, where General Stuart and his Staff made a point of visiting our old friend Mrs M., by whom we were received with her usual kindness and hospitality. Our march thence lay through the rich and beautiful county of Fauquier, which as yet showed but little signs of suffering from the war, and at dark we reached the Piedmont Station of the Baltimore-Ohio Railway, where we bivouacked. Next morning as soon as it was light the famous guerilla chief Major Mosby, who had selected this part of the country for the scene of his extraordinary achievements, made his appearance in camp, reporting that the enemy's cavalry, which till recently had fronted us near Culpepper, was rapidly following a line of

march parallel to our own, although as yet only small detachments were occupying the neighbouring county of Loudon. Our march was continued accordingly towards the village of Upperville, where our cavalry separated into several commands, with instructions to move by different roads towards the Potomac. Stuart, taking with him Robertson's and Fitz Lee's commands, the latter of which turned off towards Aldie, proceeded in the direction of Middleburg, which place he and his Staff, galloping ahead of the troops, reached late in the afternoon. We were received in this pleasant little town with marked demonstrations of joy; and as my friends here had heard from Richmond the news of my death, but not its contradiction, I underwent another ovation at my quasi-resurrection. While paying one of the many visits I had to make to give bodily assurance of my presence in the world of the living, and relating my adventures to a circle of pretty young ladies, the streets suddenly resounded with the cry of "The Yankees are coming!" raised by a party of horsemen who galloped through the town in frantic excitement, having formed part of one of our pickets, on whom the enemy, not supposed to be so near, had rather suddenly fallen. I had just time to rush out of the house and mount my horse when the enemy's cavalry poured into the town

from various directions. I soon joined General Stuart, however, and the remainder of his Staff, who were riding off as fast as their steeds could carry them in the direction of our advancing troops, which we soon reached; and General Stuart gave orders that General Robertson should move his regiments at a trot upon Middleburg, and drive the enemy from the town without delay. As I had a better knowledge of the country than Robertson I was ordered to accompany the General, who was an old friend, and gladly consulted me as to the best mode of attack. It was already dark by the time we came up with our advanced pickets, about half a mile from Middleburg, and we found them supported by their reserve, under the command of Captain Woolridge of the 4th Virginia, engaged in a lively skirmish with the hostile sharpshooters. We were informed by this brave officer that the Federals held the town in considerable force, and had erected a barricade at its entrance, which he begged as a favour to be allowed to storm. This was of course granted; and with a cheer forward went the gallant little band, driving the tirailleurs rapidly before them, and taking the barricade after a short but sanguinary struggle. At the same moment our sabres rattled from their scabbards, and the main body of the brigade dashed forward to the charge at

a thundering gallop along the broad turnpike road and down the main street, while two of our squadrons went round outside the village to protect us from a flank attack. As I had felt rather ashamed at having been forced to run from the enemy under the very eyes of my fair friends, and was naturally anxious to afford them a spectacle of a totally different character, I assumed my place of honour, leading the charge with General Robertson, and to my intense satisfaction plunged into the enemy's ranks opposite the precise spot whence I had commenced my flight, and whence, regardless of danger, the ladies now looked on and watched the progress of the combat. It lasted but a few seconds, for the enemy, unable to withstand the shock of our charge, broke and fled in utter confusion—a part of the fugitives taking the straight road along the main street, and the other turning off by the shorter route out of the town to the right. Leaving General Robertson to pursue the former with one of his regiments, I took upon myself the responsibility of following the latter with several squadrons, anticipating that the Federal reserves were in this direction. My supposition proved only too correct, for they were soon at hand to rescue their comrades, and in a few minutes we were engaged in a severe conflict. Bullets whizzed from either side—men and horses fell

dead and wounded amidst unavoidable confusion through the extreme darkness of the night, and for a time it seemed doubtful whether I should be able to hold my ground against numbers so far superior. Fortunately General Robertson, hearing the firing, soon came up with his regiment, and, taking now the offensive, we charged the Federals with our united force in front, while the squadron we had sent round the village to the right took them in flank, the effect of which was to force our antagonists into a rapid retreat, in the course of which we took several officers and 75 privates prisoners. On our return to Middleburg the General and I remained another hour with our lady friends, who, with their accustomed devotedness, were busy nursing the wounded, large numbers of whom were collected in several of the residences. It was late in the night by the time we reached Mr Rector's plantation, about two miles to the rear, where our troops encamped. This spot is situated on a formidable hill, and being the crossing point of several of the principal roads, was a point of considerable strategical importance.

Early the following morning a report was received from Fitz Lee announcing an encounter with a strong body of Federal cavalry near Aldie, which had ended in the repulse of the enemy and the capture of 60 prisoners, among whom was a colonel and several

other inferior officers. Our own loss had been heavy in killed and wounded, and among the former I lost my poor friend Major Eales of the 5th Virginia, who was struck by several bullets while leading his men to the charge. We got news also from William Lee's troops, commanded by Chamblis, who had come quite suddenly and unexpectedly on the cavalry we had driven from Middleburg, killing and wounding a great number and taking 140 prisoners. The glorious accounts had meantime reached us of the capture of Winchester and Martinsburg by Ewell, with more than 4000 prisoners, 30 pieces of artillery, and innumerable stores of ammunition and provisions, rendering the opening of the campaign as favourable to its prospects as possible. As the prisoners taken during the last few days amounted to several hundreds, I was sent to Upperville, whither they had been despatched, to superintend their transfer by detachments to Winchester—a duty in which I was occupied the greater part of the day, until toward evening the sound of a brisk cannonade recalled me back to the front. There I found that the Federals had advanced in strong force on Middleburg, had driven back our troops, and were once more in possession of the town, and that all our efforts to retake it had been vain—the cause of these failures being attributed to General Stuart's hesitation to direct the fire of

our artillery on the village, fearing to inflict too much damage on the patriotic little place. The fighting was kept up till midnight, when, finding the enemy showed no intention of pushing their advantage any further for the present, our troops, with the exception of a strong cordon of pickets, were withdrawn towards Rector's cross-roads, where we all encamped.

The morning of the 19th dawned with all the bright beauty of the month of June, but the rising of the sun was also the signal for the recommencement of hostilities, and before we had had time to breakfast, a rapid succession of cannon-shots summoned us to the front. The enemy in strong force were advancing upon a patch of wood about a mile from Middleburg, which was held by our troops, consisting of Robertson's and William Lee's commands; the dismounted sharpshooters on both sides were exchanging a lively fire, and the shells from a number of hostile batteries were bursting with a sharp crack in the tree-tops. General Stuart took up his position on a hill about half a mile to the rear, commanding a good view of the plain in front, and over the fields to the right and left. Our Chief of Artillery being engaged in another direction, I received orders to place our batteries in position; and the nature of the ground allowed this to be done so favourably that the cross-fire of our guns at a later

period saved us from serious disaster. I then rode forward to the extreme front, and, carefully reconnoitring the position of the enemy, I found that their force was far superior to our own, and that they were overlapping us on either wing. General Stuart gave me so little credit for the accuracy of my report that he was for some time convinced that he could hold his ground with ease, and even entertained the intention of sending off the greater part of William Lee's troops towards Aldie. Through my earnest remonstrances this was deferred, however, and I was again despatched to the front to see if I had not overrated the forces of the enemy. What I saw only too thoroughly confirmed my first observations; and I reported to General Stuart that in my opinion he would be forced to retreat, even if he kept the whole of his force together. But again he refused credit to the result of my observations, and said laughingly, "You're mistaken for once, Von; I shall be in Middleburg in less than an hour,"—requesting me at the same time to write out a permit for Longstreet's Commissary, Major N., who wished to visit his friends in the town, to go there unmolested. I was just writing the document, and remarking to the Major that I was afraid he would not be able to make use of it, when suddenly the firing increased in heaviness, and we saw our men hastening from

the woods in considerable confusion, followed by a dark mass of Federals in close pursuit. "Ride as quickly as you can, and rally those men; I will follow you immediately with all the troops I can gather," were Stuart's hasty instructions to me as he suddenly, though rather late, became convinced that I had all along been right. Just as I reached our breaking lines, the 9th Virginia, which had been in reserve, dashed forward in a magnificent charge; the batteries I had previously posted opened a well-directed cross-fire on the Federal horsemen; the flying regiments responded to my call, and turned upon their pursuers, whom we drove rapidly back into the woods, killing and wounding a large number, and taking many prisoners, until a severe fusillade from the enemy's sharpshooters, posted on the outskirts of the wood, protected their retreat. I had just succeeded in re-forming our own men, about 200 yards from the wood, when Stuart came up, and, riding along the lines of his troops, who always felt relieved by his appearance in the moment of extreme danger, was received by them with enthusiastic cheers. He now ordered the regiments to withdraw by squadrons to a better position —a movement which was executed under cover of a spirited fire from our batteries. The General and his Staff being the last to remain on the spot,

we soon became a target for the Federal sharp-shooters, who, by the cheering, had become well aware that Stuart was in that small group of officers. Being dressed in the same fashion as the General—a short jacket and grey hat, with waving ostrich plume, and mounted on my handsome new charger—I was mistaken for him, and my tall figure soon engaged their particular attention, for the bullets came humming round me like a swarm of bees. A ball had just stripped the gold-lace from my trousers, and I was saying to the General, riding a few steps before me on my left—"General, those Yankees are giving it rather hotly to me on your account,"—when I suddenly felt a severe dull blow, as though somebody had struck me with his fist on my neck, fiery sparks glittered before my eyes, and a tremendous weight seemed to be dragging me from my horse. After a few moments of insensibility, I opened my eyes again, to find myself lying on the ground, my charger beside me, and a number of officers and men pressing round and endeavouring to raise me. My left arm hung stiff and lifeless, and the blood was spouting from a large wound on the side of my neck, and streaming from my mouth at every breath. Unable to speak, I motioned to my comrades to leave me, and save themselves from the hail of bullets the enemy were concentrating on them, two of the soldiers about me

having already fallen lifeless. At the same moment, I saw the Yankees charging towards us from the woods; and, certain that a few minutes more would leave me a prisoner in their hands, the hateful thought inspired me with the courage to summon all my strength and energy, and, managing to regain my legs, with the assistance of Captain Blackford and Lieutenant Robertson of our Staff, I mounted my horse, and rode off from the field, supported by these two officers, whose devoted friendship could not have been proved by a more signal act of self-sacrifice. After a painful ride of more than a mile, coming across an ambulance, my comrades placed me in it, gave orders to the driver to carry me further to the rear, and then galloped off in another direction in search of our surgeon, Dr Eliason. Meanwhile the Federals were rapidly advancing, and numbers of their shells burst so near the ambulance that the driver was seized with fright, and, believing that anyhow I was nearly dead, drove off at a gallop over the rocky road, regardless of my agonised groans, every movement of the vehicle causing a fresh effusion of blood from my wound. At last I could stand it no longer, and, crawling up to him, I put my cocked pistol to his head, and made him understand that I should blow out his brains if he continued his cowardly flight. This proved effectual, and, driving

along at a moderate pace, we were overtaken by Dr Eliason, who at once examined my wound, and found that the ball had entered the lower part of my neck, cut through a portion of the windpipe, and, taking a downward course, had lodged somewhere in my right lung, and that my left arm was entirely paralysed by the same shot. A shadow passed over the Doctor's face as he examined me, for he had a liking for me; and reading in my eyes that I wished to have his undisguised opinion, he said, "My dear fellow, your wound is mortal, and I can't expect you to live till the morning," offering at the same time to execute my last wishes. This was sad enough intelligence for me; but the very positiveness of the opinion aroused within me the spirit of resistance, and I resolved to struggle against death with all the energy I possessed. In this determined mood I was enabled to attend to some matters of duty, and to give orders on a piece of paper for our ordnance-waggons, which we met on the road. I was conveyed to Dr Eliason's house, where a bed was put up for me in the parlour, and I was attended to by the ladies of the family, who nursed me as though I had been a son of the house, whilst the Doctor's blind child was sobbing by my bedside. A dose of opium procured me a kind of half slumber or trance, during which, though unable to move, I could see and hear everything that

was going on about me. One after the other all my comrades dropped in during the afternoon, and seeing my face and neck swollen and disfigured by an accumulation of air, while my features were deadly pale, I could see by their expression that they believed me dead already, and could hear the Doctor answer the repeated question, "Is he alive yet?" with "Yes, but he will not live over the night." At last Stuart himself came, and, bending over me, he kissed my forehead, and I felt two tears drop upon my cheek as I heard him say, "Poor fellow, your fate is a sad one, and it was for me that you received this mortal wound." I would have given anything to have had the power of grasping my friend's hand, and pronouncing a few words of thankfulness for his heartfelt sympathy; and when, in later times, I stood by his own deathbed, these friendly words came vividly before my recollection. I passed the night in a calm sleep, and the following morning found me, to the astonishment and delight of the Doctor and my comrades, not only alive, but wonderfully refreshed and strengthened by my long sleep. The whole of the day I was much excited by the sound of a heavy cannonade, and received frequent information through a courier who was detached to me as to the progress of a severe fight, in which the Yankees, supported by infantry, were pressing Stuart

slowly back towards Upperville. The next night I again passed favourably, and on the forenoon of the 21st I had the extreme gratification of seeing General Stuart again, who told me how much he had missed me during the action, of which he gave me a minute account. He told me, at the same time, it was quite possible that during the day he might be forced to fall back beyond Upperville, in which case I should be informed in time by one of his officers, and an ambulance would be in readiness to carry me out of reach of the enemy.

In the early part of the forenoon the fighting recommenced, the thunder of the cannon and the rattle of musketry sounded closer and closer, wounded men and stragglers began to pass through the village, and I became more and more nervous and excited. As hour after hour passed while I awaited full dressed the arrival of Stuart's promised conveyance and message, I repeatedly sent my courier out into the street, but the report was always, "Nothing heard of the General yet." The battle seemed raging in the immediate vicinity, and the shells bursting right over the village, when, to my great joy, my Prussian friend Captain Scheibert entered my room. At the first news of my misfortune, he had hastened from the distant headquarters of our army, bringing along with him General Longstreet's private ambulance,

which the latter had placed at my disposal, sending me at the same time many kind messages urging me to start at once. This I declined to do, however, as I was anxious to hear from General Stuart, for whose safety I entertained apprehensions. At last Captain Clarke, temporarily attached to our Staff, galloped in and informed me that General Stuart, wishing to avoid my being moved unnecessarily, and hoping to be able to hold his ground for a day longer, had delayed his message as long as possible; but the Federal cavalry, strongly supported by infantry, having suddenly attacked with overwhelming numbers, he had been forced to a precipitate retreat, which rendered it necessary that I should be moved away without an instant's delay. It was certainly a moment of no small excitement, when, after a cordial leave-taking with my kind host, I was carried by my friends to the ambulance, in the midst of shells bursting in the streets and crashing through the house-tops, fugitives rushing wildly by, wounded men crawling out of the way, riderless horses galloping distractedly about, whilst close at hand were heard the triumphant shouts of the pursuing foe. As my condition would not admit of my being conveyed so far as the infantry reserves, which were eight miles away in the direction of the Shenandoah, it was decided that I should be carried to Mr

B.'s plantation, not more than two miles off, which, being only accessible by a small road, it was hoped the enemy would not visit. Turning to the left after leaving Upperville, we had, on our way thither, to pass for a short distance along the main road, whence I could see a great part of the battle-field and our men everywhere in rapid retreat; the Federals, in hot pursuit, being not more than 500 yards from us, and their bullets frequently whizzing round our ears. The ambulance-driver did his best to get out of the way, while Scheibert and my servant Henry, who was leading my horses, in trying to keep up with us, presented a scene in which over-anxiety assumed a comical aspect. The Captain with the flat of his sword was thrashing the mule Kitt, who was kicking and plunging in an obstinate mood, while Henry in front was dragging her forward, and answering the Captain's intimations, that he was doing more harm than good, with a grin of obtuse satisfaction. At last Mr B.'s plantation was reached without accident, and we found the proprietor waiting for us at the gate. He was very willing to receive me into his house, but insisted, to avoid discovery, that my ambulance and escort should leave as quickly as possible, and, while I was being carried into the mansion by two old negroes, I saw them just plunging amidst the dense foliage of the neighbouring

woods. A room was prepared for me on the ground-floor; and so utterly exhausted was I, it was almost in a fainting condition that I fell upon the bed. Scarcely, however, had I been half an hour there, when I was awakened by the trampling of horses and the rattling of sabre scabbards, and an old servant entered, telling me in a whisper that the Yankees had come, and were surrounding the house. This alarming intelligence darted like an electric shock through my frame; and knowing that to be captured in my shattered state would be certain death, I resolved, with desperate energy, not to die without resistance. I reached down my arms with a painful effort, and placing my unsheathed sword, and revolver ready cocked, on the bed, prepared to shoot down the first of the enemy's troopers who should enter. Fully convinced that my last hour was come, I lay waiting to see the Yankees come in every moment; but although I could hear them talking, and see them passing to and fro on the verandah, through the jalousies of the window, close to which my bed was placed, I was astonished to find they did not make their appearance. After about half an hour of the most thrilling anxiety, all seemed to have become suddenly quiet again; and my kind-hearted host made his appearance, with the news that the Federals had

gone for the present, but were still in the neighbourhood, and had stationed a picket on a hill a few hundred yards off. He added that the hostile soldiers, whose hearts he had won by a liberal supply of every kind of refreshment, had mentioned that they had been searching every house in Upperville and the vicinity for a prominent Confederate (supposed for some time to be Stuart himself), who had fallen severely wounded, but that to all appearance he had died, and his body had been buried by the rebels previous to their retreat.* The rest of the evening passed rapidly away, nor were we again disturbed by the Federal soldiers, one or two only coming on separate occasions to fetch milk or other eatables. Next morning I was greatly surprised at the appearance of my servant Henry, who, in his anxiety about my fate, had crossed over from the opposite side of the Shenandoah, where he had left my horses in safety, and, hiding the mule in the woods about a mile off, had managed to steal unobserved through the Federal lines. I was quite touched at the fidelity of my negro, who sat all day at my bedside, anxiously watching every breath I drew. Later in

* The same story was published afterwards in the Northern papers. "The big Prussian rebel, who was Stuart's right arm," they said, "had been killed at last, and his body buried at Upperville."

the evening, to my great astonishment and delight, I received a visit from Dr Eliason, who informed us that the enemy was retreating, Stuart having retaken Upperville, and being in pursuit of the Federals in the direction of Middleburg. The Doctor was satisfied with my progress towards recovery, and told me if I reached the ninth day he believed my wound would get quite well. The following day my friends from all parts of the army called in large numbers, among them Generals Stuart, Hampton, and Robertson; and I was delighted to have recovered my voice sufficiently to thank them for all their kindness and friendship. General Longstreet sent his three doctors, with all of whom I was intimate, and they brought me a message from him, stating that he was sorry he could not come himself, but that he would have advanced a whole division to get me out of the enemy's hands had they not retreated. Our army had in the mean time continued steadily advancing through the valley; and on the 25th all our troops left the vicinity of Upperville to march onward to the Potomac, leaving me behind, sad that I was no longer able to share in their fatigues, their dangers, and their glory.

Henceforward my strength improved very rapidly; the outer wound had nearly closed; from only being able to swallow a little cream I could now take more

substantial food, and was allowed to sit up an hour or two in the verandah to enjoy the cool aromatic breeze travelling hither from the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains. Every kindness was shown me by Mr B. and his family, and I received many kind messages from the ladies of the neighbourhood, who sent me nosegays every day; so that I should have felt perfectly happy had not my mind been troubled with the thought of being away from my comrades, and had not, moreover, the frequency of the Federal scouting parties crossing the Potomac rendered it dangerous that I should remain, my presence having become much more widely known in the vicinity. After postponing my departure several times I at last took leave of my kind hosts, and started off in an ambulance which General Robertson had placed at my disposal, accompanied by a courier who had been detached to me, and by Henry with my horses. The journey to Culpepper was a tedious one, and the jolting of the ambulance along the rough roads was so painful that I had to ride on horseback the greater part of the way. I arrived, however, without accident, except, indeed, the upsetting of my vehicle in the swollen waters of the Hazel river, through which I lost all my traps, with the exception of my arms and a little bag in which I kept my diary, and which I saved by jumping into the foaming stream at the

imminent peril of my life. Leaving Henry with my horses behind me at Culpepper, I went in a hand-car to Orange, and thence by rail to Richmond, where I met with a kind and cordial reception under the hospitable roof of Mr P., which for some time was to become my home. With the heat of the month of June my sufferings commenced, and were greatly aggravated by the conflicting rumours which reached me from Lee's army after the battle of Gettysburg. I could scarcely draw my breath, and coughed continually night and day, bringing up quantities of blood with small fragments of the shattered rings of my windpipe, and pieces of clothing which the bullet had carried along with it. I was frequently attacked with fits of suffocation, which sometimes came upon me while walking in the street, and were so violent that I had to be carried home in a state of insensibility resembling death. At last my doctor, who had but little hope of my recovery, recommended me to try the effects of country air; and having received pressing invitations from my friends at Dundee, in Hanover County, I went there towards the end of August. The very day after my arrival, my attacks, accompanied by severe fever, became so violent that I was prostrated on a sick-bed for two long months, every day of which my kind friends expected would be my last. The natural strength of my constitution,

however, carried me through all these trials; and about the middle of October I was allowed to leave my room, but reduced to a skeleton, having lost ninety pounds in weight, and so weak I had to be carried about in a chair. On the first day I left my bed I was startled by the report that a body of Federals was approaching the house; and, dreading the danger of capture more than the consequences of exposure, I insisted, against the earnest entreaties of my friends, on immediate departure. A fatiguing ride in a buggy over eighteen miles of rough road to Richmond produced, as was anticipated, a relapse, and I was again laid prostrate for nearly two months, during which I received the kindest attentions from the inhabitants of Richmond, principally Mr and Mrs P. and their family, at whose house I was staying, and who nursed and tended me as though I had been their own son. I had frequent tidings from General Stuart and my comrades, and received from them letters full of friendship and affection. In one of these the general said:—"My dear Von, my camp seems dull and deserted to me since you left. On the battle-field I do not know how to do without you, and I feel as if my right arm had been taken away from me." My chief had, even before I was wounded, tried to have me promoted to a Brigadier-Generalship, to which rank he considered me entitled, in consideration of my services and the

facility with which on several occasions I had shown I could handle large bodies of troops. These recommendations for promotion were approved by General Lee, and desired, I am proud to say, by all the officers and men of the cavalry corps; but the repeated applications made by my General with this object were as often rejected by the officials at Richmond, who hesitated, as it seemed, to promote a foreigner too rapidly. Great satisfaction, however, was afforded me by the public acknowledgment of my insignificant services, which took place during the month of January 1864, in the form of a joint resolution of thanks by both Houses of the Confederate Congress. Lafayette was the last foreigner to whom this honour was accorded in America, and out of courtesy the resolution was couched in the same words as had been used on that occasion, and which were as follows:—

"Whereas Major Heros Von Borcke of Prussia, Adjutant and Inspector-General of the Cavalry Corps of the Army of Northern Virginia, having left his own country to assist in securing the independence of ours, and by his personal gallantry on the field having won the admiration of his comrades, as well as of his Commanding General, all of whom deeply sympathise with him in his present sufferings from wounds received in battle, therefore—Resolved by

the Congress of the Confederate States of America, that the thanks of Congress are due, and the same hereby tendered to Major Heros Von Borcke for his self-sacrificing devotion to our Confederacy, and for his distinguished services in support of our cause. Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be transmitted to Major Von Borcke by the President of the Confederate States."

This document I received with a very flattering autograph letter from the President, which was followed by hundreds of congratulatory epistles from my comrades in the army, and from friends in all parts of the country. My health was progressing but slowly, although I daily gained strength, and I was gradually recovering the use of my left arm, the revivification of which, however, was attended with severe nervous pain. The winter in Richmond passed gaily away amidst a succession of balls, dinner-parties, and private theatricals; and being in my invalid state an object of sympathy, I had the luxury of being much petted by the fair residents and visitors of the capital. I had frequently the pleasure of seeing Stuart during the winter months, and once or twice visited him in his camp near Culpepper, where I was received on all hands, from the General down to the last courier, with so much tender attention that I was deeply touched, and felt it hard to tear

myself from the gallant fellows to whom I was attached by so many ties of past association. As my health grew stronger I tried repeatedly, after the opening of the spring campaign, to take the field again, but each time I was severely punished for my imprudence by being thrown upon a sick-bed for weeks, and I had to confine my ambition to the discharge of office duty in Richmond, while General Lee was fighting the grand battles of the Wilderness and Spotsylvania, and Stuart was adding to his fame by new victories.

On the morning of the 11th May 1864, Richmond was thrown once more into a state of excitement by the rapid advance against it of the Federal cavalry under General Sheridan, who had managed to march round our lines. Several brigades of infantry hastened from the south side of the James river to the defence of the city; the militia was called out, and all expected that the outer lines of fortifications would every moment become the scene of a serious combat. Everything continued quiet, however, in that direction until about eleven o'clock, when a sudden cannonade sounded in the rear of the enemy—the indefatigable Stuart having followed in their track, and with the small force, which was all he had been able, owing to the rapid marching, to take with him, being now enabled to cut off the Federal line of retreat.

The sound of our light guns, which I recognised so well, did not fail to rouse me into a state of excitement; and as an old war-horse prances and curvets at the shrill ringing of the trumpet, I felt the blood pour like electric fire through my veins, and rushed about in feverish uneasiness. I fancied I heard my sword rattling in its scabbard to summon me to the scene of conflict by my General's side; but, as I was separated from my own chargers, I tried to borrow a horse for the occasion from one of my many friends. All my endeavours to this effect, however, were vain; everybody had already hastened to the front, and, unable to bear the suspense any longer, I impressed by force one of the horses from the first Government team I came across, and, throwing my saddle on its back, hurried off to the scene of action. The animal I had laid hold of was a miserable little pony, but I managed to spur him forward at a tolerably swift pace; and rapidly passing our double line of intrenchments, I soon reached our last infantry pickets, where I endeavoured to ascertain the exact position of our own troops and of the enemy. As the hostile force lay immediately between ours, it was not easy to get this information; but a road was pointed out to me with such assurance that it would take me to General Stuart without bringing me into collision with the Yankees, that I galloped along it with very

little precaution, and had just crossed over a bridge, when, from the woods on the right and left, a scattered band of Federal cavalry bore down upon me with loud shouts, firing their revolvers at me, and demanding my surrender. I immediately turned my pony's head round, and galloped off to the rear with all the speed I could, and an exciting chase now ensued for several miles, till it was put a stop to by the fire of our pickets, whom I reached completely exhausted, and thoroughly surprised at my narrow escape. It was sufficiently evident, by the sound of the firing, that Stuart was hardly pressed, and I hastened at once to General Bragg, commanding our infantry, which, from a succession of reinforcements, was now of considerable strength, begging him at once to advance several brigades to the assistance of Stuart. The cautiousness characteristic of that general, however, induced him to resist my appeals, and finding further effort useless, I slowly retraced my steps to Richmond. The rapid run, and the excitement of my pursuit had proved too much for my strength, and I had scarcely reached the outskirts of the town, when, as I approached a friend's house, the blood began to stream from my mouth, and I was carried, half fainting, to my temporary domicile at Mr P.'s, where I was immediately put to bed. After a long and refreshing sleep, I was awakened

suddenly about daybreak by the voice of Dr Brewer, Stuart's brother-in-law, who informed me that my General had been wounded severely, and carried during the night to his place, where he was anxious to see me. Forgetting my own condition at these sad tidings, I dressed myself in a few minutes and hastened to the bedside of my dear friend, whom I found in a small room of the Doctor's house, surrounded by most of the members of his Staff. He received me with a smile, saying, "I'm glad you've come, my dear Von; you see they've got me at last, but don't feel uneasy. I don't think I'm so badly wounded as you were, and I hope I shall get over it as you did." He then recounted to me all the incidents of the combat, and the manner in which he had been wounded. Hoping every hour to hear of General Bragg's attack, which in all probability would have resulted in the annihilation of the whole force of the enemy, he had successfully resisted their efforts to break through his lines, and for more than six hours had fought with eleven hundred men against eight thousand. At about four o'clock, the Federals succeeded by a general charge in breaking and driving back one of our regiments which General Stuart was rallying in an open field. When continuing their advance the enemy were met by the 1st Virginia and driven back again in confusion.

Seeing near him some of the dismounted Federal cavalry, who were running off on the opposite side of a high fence, Stuart rode up to them calling on them to surrender, and firing at them as they continued their flight. He had just discharged the last barrel of his revolver when the hindmost of the fugitives, coming close up to the fence, fired his revolver at him, the ball taking effect in the lower part of the stomach and traversing the whole body. Stuart, finding himself severely wounded, and the enemy at the same time renewing their attack, turned his charger quickly round and galloped half a mile further to the rear, where he was taken from his horse nearly insensible from loss of blood, and sent in an ambulance to Richmond. During the early part of the morning the General felt comparatively easy, and the physician entertained great hope that the wound might not prove fatal. Towards noon, however, a change took place for the worse, and our fears began to be greatly excited. About this time President Davis visited the prostrate hero; taking his hand, the President said, "General, how do you feel?" He replied, "Easy, but willing to die if God and my country think I have fulfilled my destiny and done my duty." As evening approached mortification set in, and no hopes could any longer be entertained. He became delirious, and his mind

wandered over the battle-fields where he had fought, then to his wife and children, and again to the front. Mrs Stuart was absent with her children in the country, and several messages had been despatched informing her of her husband's state, and urging her instant return to Richmond; and in the intervals of relief from pain and delirium, the General frequently inquired if she had not yet come, beginning now to doubt the possibility of his recovery. About five o'clock the General asked Dr Brewer, his brother-in-law, how long he thought it possible he could live, and whether he could survive through the night; and being told that death was rapidly approaching, he nodded, and said, "I am resigned, if it be God's will; but I should like to see my wife. But God's will be done." He then made his last dispositions, and took leave of us all, I being the last. I had been sitting on his bed, holding his hand in mine, and handing him the ice, which he ate in great abundance, and which was applied to his burning hot wounds to cool them. Drawing me towards him, and grasping my hand firmly, he said, "My dear Von, I am sinking fast now, but before I die I want you to know that I never loved a man as much as yourself. I pray your life may be long and happy; look after my family after I'm gone, and be the same true friend to my wife and children that

you have been to me." These were the last connected words he spoke; during the next few hours the paroxysms of pain became more frequent and violent, until at about seven o'clock death relieved the suffering hero from his agonies. Poor Mrs Stuart arrived an hour after the General's death. Of all the messages sent to her, my telegram alone had reached; but the operator hearing, after I had left the office, that Stuart was getting better, altered the words "the General is dangerously wounded," and substituted "slightly wounded." The poor lady arrived at Dr Brewer's house, unaware of her husband's death; and when, on asking if she could see the General, and receiving an affirmative answer, she rushed up-stairs, expecting to find him alive, it was only in the most cruel manner, by the spectacle of her husband's cold pale brow, that she learned the terrible misfortune which had befallen her and her children. I myself mourned my chief as deeply as if I had lost a beloved brother; and so many of my friends being soon after called away, I really felt possessed with a longing that I might die myself. On the evening of the 13th, in the midst of the roaring of the enemy's cannon, which reached us from Drewry's Bluff, we carried Stuart's remains to the beautiful cemetery at Hollywood, near Richmond, where he lies in a simple grave by the side of his beloved little daughter Flora.

Of a calm summer evening I frequently rode out to this quiet spot, sitting for hours on my leader's grave, recalling his excellent qualities, and musing over the many glorious battles through which we had fought side by side.

General Lee announced the death of General Stuart in the following order :—

"HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
May 20, 1864.

"The Commanding General announces to the army with heartfelt sorrow the death of Major-General J. E. B. Stuart, late Commander of the cavalry corps of the Army of Northern Virginia. Among the gallant soldiers who have fallen in this war, General Stuart was second to none in valour, in zeal, in unflinching devotion to his country. His achievements form a conspicuous part of the history of this army, with which his name and services will be for ever associated. To military capacity of a high order, and all the noble virtues of the soldier, he added the brighter graces of a pure life, sustained by the Christian's faith and hope. The mysterious hand of an all-wise God has removed him from the scene of usefulness and fame. His grateful countrymen will mourn his loss and cherish his memory. To his comrades in arms he left the proud recollection

of his deeds, and the inspiring influence of his example.

"R. E. LEE, General."

My grief at the death of Stuart, and the excitement of the last few days, had a very injurious effect on my health for months afterwards, and again I had to resign the hope of once more taking the field. During the month of June, General Randolph wrote to General Lee in the name of several prominent citizens, by whom, as well as by himself, it was considered a measure of safety for the capital, requesting that I might be put in command of a brigade of cavalry, to be stationed near Richmond. This application was strongly seconded by General Hampton, Stuart's worthy successor, and by General Lee himself, but it was rejected at the War-Office, on the score of my health, and an infantry officer was afterwards put in command of the same troops. Under these circumstances, instead of doing service in the field I had to spend the summer and autumn in light duties, inspections, &c., filling up the rest of my time with visits to friends in the mountains of Virginia, where my poor suffering lungs had the benefit of the cool aromatic breezes. As winter approached, a proposal already mooted several times—namely, that of sending me abroad

on Government duty, but which, till then, I had always refused, hoping soon to be able to go into active campaigning—was renewed. There being very little chance of active service during the cold weather, and General Hampton, General Lee, and President Davis, urging me to go on a mission for the Government to England, I at last yielded to their wishes, hoping to be back for the spring campaign. My commanding officer had in the mean time urgently requested that my rank should be raised to that of Colonel, and the day before my departure I had the gratification of receiving my promotion from the hands of the President. After a tedious journey of four days and four nights, I reached Wilmington on Christmas-day; and while the heavy guns were roaring at the first bombardment of Fort Fisher, I ran the blockade in the late Confederate war-steamer Talahassee, arriving in England, after a circuitous route by the West India Islands, in the month of February 1865. There I was saved the grief of being an eyewitness of the rapid collapse of the Confederacy, and the downfall of a just and noble cause.

Lee's glorious army is no longer in existence: the brave men who formed it have, after innumerable sufferings and privations, bowed to the enemy's power and numbers, and dispersed to follow peaceful

pursuits. But those who have survived the fearful struggle for independence, can look back upon a series of battles and victories unequalled in history; and every one of us will for ever speak with pride of the time when he was a soldier of the army of Northern Virginia. I myself am still an invalid. The ball which I carry in my lungs gives me frequent suffering, and has broken my once so robust health; but as every renewal of my pains reminds me of the past, they are alleviated and almost effaced by the pleasure with which I revert to the time when I fought side by side with those brave men; and I shall ever rejoice that I drew my sword for the gallant people of the late Confederacy.

THE END.

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MAP OF THE SEAT OF WAR IN VIRGINIA.

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